

HARRISON's EDITION:



THE

B A B L E R.

BY HUGH KELLY, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES



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P R E F A C E.

THREE is no subject in the world upon which an author speaks with a greater degree of latent pride, or a deeper air of outward humility, than his own productions.—He is perfectly sensible that they are trifles,—yet he is bold enough to publish them—and while he seems to relinquish every title to the favourable opinion of the world, he returns his warmest thanks for past obligations, and indirectly tells us he has obtained it—thus the public are reduced to the agreeable alternative, either of acknowledging his merit, or reflecting upon their own judgment—and the consequence generally is, that through a fear of disparaging the credit of our taste, or perspicuity, we exalt him at once into a writer of consummate modesty, and uncommon abilities.

The author of the **BABLER**, however, wishes to steer between the extremes of an ostentatious parade, and an affected diffidence; he would by no means presumptuously place his pieces upon a forum with the essays of some cotemporaries, nor would he meanly sink them to the level of others—a first-rate reputation is no less beyond his hopes, than his deserts; yet, if in the scale of honourable comparison, he rises with no capital degree of merit, he is satisfied that he cannot be the lowest in the balance of contempt.—This declaration he is the more emboldened to make, as during the course of his publication, he constantly had the honour of being re-printed by the greatest number of his literary fellow-labourers in the vineyard of the public, and have been often happy enough to go through half a dozen editions, in half the number of days.

In the concluding number of these volumes, the author has made some observations on the nature of essay writing in general, and rendered it incontestibly evident, that there is no walk of genius which lies under so many difficulties; yet of all the various essayists, the newspaper drudge is the most unfortunately circumstanced: small as the boundaries of a **SPECTATOR**, a **RAMBLER**, a **WORLD**, an **ADVENTURER**, or a **CONNOISSEUR**, may seem, the news-paper writer is under a necessity of moving in a still more contracted circle—the Printer (who on these occasions is a very great man) does not so much consider the importance of a writer's subject, as the immediate profit of the partners; it is not the improvement of the reader which he consults, but the interest of the paper, or the topic of the day, and therefore often stinteth the essayist in room, to advertise a parcel of stolen goods, or to epitomize the trial of some remarkable murderer.

I remember when the **BABLER** was first undertaken, I sent an essay to the press, on which I had employed extraordinary pains; and which I warmly imagined would have procured me at least a fortnight's reputation—the subject of the essay was the absurdity of party distinctions; but unhappily, though I had endeavoured to contract myself within the most moderate limits, I had still exceeded the prudential bounds

of the Printer;—he accordingly brought me back the manuscript, and declared it could not possibly be inserted without undergoing some considerable amputations—it was in vain I argued with him on the importance of the subject, the spirit of the writing, and the credit it would certainly do his paper—the rogue was incorrigibly dull; and told me if I would have it in, I must strike a pen through the *King*, cut out *Lord Bute*, and burn the people of *England*.—These conditions were too hard to be complied with—and I rather chose to leave my admirable essay out entirely, than mangle it to the taste of an unfeeling blockhead, who appeared so glaringly callous to the beauties of a masterly production.

Circumscribed thus unhappily in my limits, the reader of judgment will not be surprized at finding many subjects thrown frequently into little histories, which otherwise situated, I should have attempted to discuss on the methodical principles of a regular argument.—As I had not room to enter into elaborate disquisitions, it was my business to give the reader a little entertainment; and my duty at least to amuse his fancy, since I was unable to improve his understanding.

The principal matter which the author thinks himself under a necessity of apologizing for, is the similarity which the reader will find in some of the subjects; this was a circumstance which, though the author was well aware it would expose him to the censure of the judicious, he could not conveniently avoid; as it was impossible to deliver himself fully on some points in a single paper, he was under a necessity of resuming such as were most material to be discussed: he flatters himself, however, that he will not be thought extremely reprehensible on this account, since those who are satisfied with the mere superficials of a subject, may easily escape the repetitions; while those who expect any information by proceeding, may as easily pardon the prolixity. Upon the whole, there is nothing in the volumes now offered to the public, for which the author could not urge some palliation; but his excuses, perhaps, by trespassing on the readers patience, at a time they cannot correct the minutest error in his performance, will themselves stand in need of an apology; he will therefore only add, that tenderness in criticism is the next virtue to generosity; and that he shall scarcely feel a greater share of gratitude for those, who kindly discover any little merit in the following Essays, than for those who benevolently overlook their numerous imperfections.

and this will be easier to learn and find. **THE**



THE
B A B L E R.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

N^o I. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12.

THREE is scarcely a little Essayist, now-a-days, who amuses the world under any particular title, but gives himself airs of the greatest consequence, and claims some degree of affinity with the **TATLER** and **SPECTATOR**: indeed, where the itch of reading is nearly equal to the *cacoethes scribendi*, a man has no great occasion to be possessed of either much genius or education to become a literary legislator, and set himself up as a regulator of the public; the most material article of all is, the choice of a tolerable title to attract the attention of the reader; and if this can be happily struck out, learning and abilities are not so much as secondary considerations.

In modern literature, a motto is a matter of no little consequence; and an author, in the present *anno domini*, can no more pretend to circulate his writings without a motto, than without the assistance of the daily and evening papers: many an industrious pedlar, in the small wares of letters, has got off an edition of his pamphlet, without any other recommendation than the name and motto; and alarmed the world with a very terrible title-page, when the contents were as innocent as water-gruel, and insipid as cold yeast without either lemon or salt.

In this universal pursuit after titles, I do not esteem myself very unhappy in the choice of the **BABLER**: it is a character under which the generality of mankind are more or less distinguished, and which is indiscriminately applicable to all orders and situations; different people only differ in the manner, but they are always sure of agreeing in essentials; and the humble mechanic, who harangues for the good of his country over a solitary pint of porter, is in fact no more a *Babler*, than a personage of distinguished rank, who talks about the national importance with all the usual ease and insipidity of distinction and importance. In reality, the great business of mankind is *babling*; for, if we place the principal happiness of society in conversation, a very little regard to any company we may happen to sit with, will convince us, that the generality of our acquaintance are nothing more than *Bablers*; so very limited is the number which discourses, now-a-days, with any inclination to improve or entertain, that, I dare say, my readers will be surprised when I set down some of the most eminent names in the kingdom among the order of *Bablers*.

The word *Babler* being principally confined to verbal indiscretion and impertinence,

pertinence, I shall employ the remaining part of this essay in giving my readers such a particular description of the *Babler*, that they can never be at a loss in the application of the term when they meet with any of my relations.

Whenever a person seems extremely earnest to engross the conversation of the company, there can be no manner of doubt that he is a *Babler*.

Whenever a person is uncommonly liberal in the payment of unnecessary compliments, the most extensive degree of good-nature cannot avoid setting him down a *Babler*.

Whenever a man is fond of remembering tedious and unentertaining stories, and is apt to be put in mind of such and such a particular anecdote by some corresponding circumstance which may casually arise in conversation, that man is, by every manner of means, a *Babler*.

Whenever we see a man making an unnecessary parade of his education, and interlarding his discourse with technical terms, or sentences not clearly understood, in the language of Dogberry—
“ Set him down a—*Babler*. ”

Whenever we find a man fond of repeating his own jokes, and desirous of telling the *good thing* he said to his

friend Jack such-a-one, at such a time—down with him—a *Babler*.

Whenever we see any person ready to circulate the laugh at the expence of decency and good manners, there is no occasion to hesitate in pronouncing him a *Babler*.

Whenever we meet with a man disposed to contradict, for no other reason but to shew the superiority of his own abilities—O! a *Babler*, a *Babler*! And,

When we hear him dispute upon a subject he is totally unacquainted with, who can deny but he is a most consummate *Babler*?

Having thus given the outlines of a *Babler*, any person, with a very indifferent pencil, may work up a striking likeness of the greatest number of his acquaintance: for my own part, like the rest of my brethren, I shall speak of men and things as I find myself prompted by humour or inclination; the only restriction I shall lay myself under, is ever to have decency and candour in view, and never entirely to lose sight of my little judgment and understanding. Upon these principles I hope to entertain the public; and, should I fail in the attempt, I must condole myself with a line of my friend Horace—

Magnis tamen exdit austi.

Nº II. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19.

IN the variety of courses which the generality of mankind pursue for the attainment of happiness, it is not a little surprising that they should be shamefully inattentive in one of the most material points that can possibly insure it. The point I mean is, that union of the sexes which, properly concluded, is the foundation of felicity to individuals, and of security to the public. Nature has given every parent a power of directing the inclinations of their children, but allows of no unreasonable authority to force them; and such as have a sensible concern for the happiness of their offspring, should be particularly careful that a reciprocal passion subsisted between the parties before they consented to an inviolable union. The ill directed tenderness of parental affection has often been productive of the most unhappy consequences; and many a father has made his children miserable

for life, by a mistaken solicitude for their welfare, and by making a provision for their happiness which was not in the least essential, and for which they had not, in all probability, any manner of occasion. I am led naturally to this subject by a paper now lying before me, the contents of which are here presented to the reader.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

The wretch who is sentenc'd to die,
May escape, and leave Justice behind;
From his country, perhaps, he may fly,
But, O!—Can he fly from his mind?

I Am the most miserable of men; and notwithstanding it might be more prudent to conceal the cause of my affliction, I find an inclination to disclose it in this public manner too strongly to be

THE BABLER.

be resisted. I am a young fellow of five and twenty, Sir; neither deformed in my person, nor, I hope, unhappy in my temper: my fortune is easy, my education liberal; and, I suppose, I am as well calculated to pass in a crowd as the generality of my acquaintance.

About twelve months ago, Sir, I fell passionately in love with a young lady, whose beauty and merit entitled her to a rank much more exalted than what I could raise her to, though she was much my inferior in point of fortune. She was at that time courted by a young gentleman in the law; and matters had actually gone so far, that a day was appointed for the solemnization of the nuptials. All this I was very well informed of; yet, impetuously hurried by the violence of my passion, I disclosed it to the father. He was a man of the world—my circumstances were much better than his intended son-in-law's; and he paid a less attention to the happiness, than he shewed for the advancement of his daughter. Why should I take up your time, Mr. Babler? Maria's match with her former lover was immediately broke off; and the unhappy young lady, who never presumed to disobey her father's commands, was torn from the man of her heart, and married to one she could never love.

I was in hope, Mr. Babler, that a little time, and a tender behaviour on my side, as a man never loved more fondly than myself, would have utterly erased Mr. Bridgegrove from the bosom of my wife, and placed me in his stead. But, had I not been besotted with my love, I might have easily known, that a laudable impression upon the mind of a sensible woman is never to be eradicated: no, Mr. Babler, it is utterly impossible. When a young raw girl, indeed, entertains something like a regard for a man, without knowing the reason of her esteem, it is nothing but a struggle of desire; or, more properly speaking, the wheyiness of inclination, which, in a little time, she laughs at herself, and, as she grows in understanding, easily skims off. But, where a woman of sense has placed her affections on a man of merit, the passion is never to be erased; the more the ponders on his worth, the more reason she has to love him; and she can never cease

to think of his perfections, till she is wholly divested of thought.

Unhappily for me, Mr. Babler, this was the case. Mr. Bridgegrove possessed the whole heart of Maria, and, in reality, deserved it: he is, perhaps, the most amiable of men, and, poor fellow, loves her to distraction. I have been now married, Mr. Babler, ten months, and have, I flatter myself, expressed every act of tenderness proper for the lover or the husband, but to no purpose. My wife behaves with the utmost complaisance, is uncommonly solicitous to please; but this conduct is the effect of her good sense, and not the consequence of her love. The little endearing intercourses between husband and wife, are suffered, not enjoyed; if I complain of her coldness, she assumes an air more gay, and affects to be pleased, though I see the starting tear just bursting from her eye, and know the grief that rankles at her heart. Nay, the more I care, the more miserable she is made; and I see her generously lamenting that she cannot place her heart upon the man that possesses her hand, and is not utterly unworthy of her esteem. O! Mr. Babler, he must have no delicacy, no feeling, that can bear a circumstance like this unmoved. How am I frequently torn to madness with reflection, even when I have her fastened to my bosom, to think her whole soul is at that very moment running on another man! In her sleep she frequently throws one of her fine arms round my neck, and pronounces the name of Bridgegrove in a manner that distracts me. Our little boy, (for she is lately brought to bed) instead of a blessing, is another source of anxiety to us both. I over-heard her, yesterday morning, weeping over the child, and crying—‘ My sweet boy, ‘ poor Bridgegrove should have been ‘ your father.’ Oh! Mr. Babler, can any situation be so affliction as mine?—I have made the most amiable of women for ever wretched, and torn a worthy young fellow from the mistress of his heart. I have brought all my sorrows on myself, with the distressful consideration of having no right to complain. I deserve to be miserable. The man who would meanly hope to be happy in marriage, by sacrificing the inclination of the woman he loves, and ungenerously loses every regard to her wishes, while he endeavours to gratify his own, has

no pretension to felicity. Had I never obtained the possession of Maria, I should not have been half so wretched as I am now: time, and another object, would, perhaps, have enabled me to bear her loss:—but, now master of her person, to find another in possession of her heart, and to know that there is one whom she holds considerably dearer than myself, are considerations absolutely insupportable. I cannot dwell any longer

on the subject: I shall therefore conclude with an advice to my own sex; never to marry a woman whose heart they know is engaged, nor to take a pitiful advantage of a father's authority, in opposition to her inclination. If she be a good woman, she can never forget her first choice, and if she be bad, will inevitably bring shame and scandal on the second. I am, Sir, &c.

N^o III. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26.

WHEN I first comincienc'd Periodical Essayist, my fears presented a thousand difficulties to my imagination, in the proceſs of my design. I dreamed of incessant application to pen and ink, and of continual visits from those very worthy gentlemen, who are honoured with the appellation of *Devils to the Press*: but my apprehensions were entirely groundleſs. I no sooner appeared in print, than a whole army of good-natured persons instantly drew up in my favour; amongst the rest the wife of a city man of fashion, who writes to me after the following manner.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am a haberdasher's wife, not very far from Cornhill; and though I never received any other education than what the English language could afford me, or made a greater progress in my studies than the Rule of Three Direct; yet I can spell tolerably enough, and, though I say it, ' know a sheep's head from a carrot,' as well as Hodge in the new opera.—But, Sir, to the businesſ of my letter.

My husband and I, Sir, are a young couple just set tip in businesſ; and, you know, Mr. Babler, as such, ought to be extremely complaisant and respectful to our customers. In the way of trade, every body who lays out a penny with us, is to be considered as our superiors, at least while they stay in our shop:—but my husband, who, it seems, is wiser than I am, is quite of a contrary opinion. He never keeps his hat off a moment in the house, and behaves to every one as if he rather laid them under an obligation by the sale of his own com-

modities. If a lady steps in to buy a piece of ribband, or a hat, instead of shewing her a variety of things, that may fix her attention, or induce her to make an additional purchase, he talks to her about plays, and about operas: instead of saying—‘ These, Madam, are the best pair of gloves in the kingdom,’ he cries out—‘ To be sure Mr. Garrick is the greatest actor in the world!’ or—‘ To be sure Miss Brent is the finest singer in the universe.’ There is no bearing of him, Mr. Babler: the fellow will prate a whole hour about Shakespeare, when he ought to be numbering up his threads; and run himself out of breath in encomiums on Otway, when he ought to be busy in the praise of his handkerchiefs.

But these are trifles, Mr. Babler, when compared to some other instances of his behaviour: why, Sir, he would not rise from dinner to serve the Lady Mayoress. At dinner time, if he is told any person wants him about businesſ:—‘ D—n it, do they think he'll get up from his dinner? Can they find no other time to come but when he is just sat down at table? Let them wait or call again, which ever they think proper.’ Ah, Mr. Babler, people that are in trade should get up from breakfast, dinner, and supper, to attend the necessary duties of their profession. Those, who have no other dependence, should think themselves happy in being called to their businesſ at dinner time; since it is by that means they are enabled to have any dinner at all. No later than Wednesday last, Sir, this attention to his stomach lost him a country order for a hundred pounds; and even the deputy of our ward was kept waiting yesterday above ten minutes in the shop,

thought

though he came to discharge a little account which was due for his wife and two daughters.

As I am resolved, now I have begun, Mr. Babler, to let you know all his faults, I must inform you he has lately bought a horse, and paid thirty guineas for this hopeful bargain: this horse he is to ride out every Sunday if the weather be fine, and he happens to have no engagement. 'Tis odds, Mr. Babler, that he does not find a ride convenient once a month, or that something does not prevent his excursion even at the end of that period: but, however, let us suppose that the weather and accidental engagements will permit him to go out one Sunday in four, the stabling and provender for his horse will at least amount to seven shillings a week; so that, every time he takes a ride out, horse hire will cost him eight and twenty shillings—not to say any thing of the original purchase—and for half the money he might get a hackney coach for the whole day, to carry all his family. And here I cannot help reflecting, Mr. Babler, upon this injudicious practice of riding out every

Sunday, which seems so much in fashion among the generality of our polite citizens. If a tradesman buys a horse, and does not ride out every Sunday, his purchase becomes useless, and his money thrown away: if he does, he debars himself of every other enjoyment, and cuts himself off from the only opportunity he has of attending the public worship of God. He is loit to his family and friends one day in seven, and is an alien to his Creator on the most sacred of them all.

Pray, Mr. Babler, print this letter: your writings are much read in our neighbourhood; and my husband himself condescends to say you are a very sensible sort of a fellow. If you should have an opportunity, I beg you would speak something about the dress of tradesmen; for I have some reason to think my husband has actually bespoke a laced hat, and given the taylor directions to put vellum holes in his next suit of cloaths. Do oblige me, dear Mr. Babler; and I shall always acknowledge myself much your humble servant,

WINIFRED TAPLEY.

Nº IV. SATURDAY, MARCH 5.

OF all the enemies to society, there is none which should be held in greater abhorrence than a man of gallantry professed; and yet, in this fashionable age, it is a character which the generality of our young fellows, and but too many of our old ones, are uncommonly solicitous to obtain. But the strongest invectives against this infamous disposition may not, perhaps, be half so serviceable as a little story, which a very worthy gentleman of my acquaintance favoured me with last night; for which reason I shall lay aside declaration, and proceed to my narrative.

Not many weeks ago, at the first reduction of our forces, among many other officers who were dismissed, a young lieutenant, one Mr. Fransham, received his discharge. As the income of this gentleman's commission, during his continuance in the army, could not suffer him to lay by any mighty matters for an emergency, his half-pay would have been but a slender subsistence, had not an old school-fellow of his, one Mr. Harold, a country gentleman, made

him a cordial offer of his house and table, till he should be fortunately provided for in some reputable employ. Mr. Harold was the most amiable of men; he had a handsome person, a fine understanding, an affluent fortune, and a benevolent heart: he had been but newly married to a young lady of whom he was passionately fond; and who, if wit and beauty were capable of constituting matrimonial felicity, could not fail of making him the most happy of men.

Mr. Fransham was one of those people who profess a Covent Garden sort of knowledge; and, like a maggot in a cheese, knew no part of the world but the rotten. His conversation was lively, but not improving; and he carried the appearance of much understanding, though, in reality, he had but little sense: his company, however, was entertaining enough; he talked of the polite diversions; told a story tolerably well; and sung with some voice, and much taste. As the flashiness of his conversation carried the appearance of

B wit,

wit, Mrs. Harold was not a little pleased with her new visitant; and Mr. Fransham, from the first moment he came into the house, had formed a design of rendering himself as agreeable as possible to her; and, without either being confined by the rules of friendship, or the principles of gratitude, he thought he could not be in reality a fine gentleman without endeavouring to alienate her affections from her husband. To dwell upon the circumstances is unnecessary; he left no art unexercised to gain his point; and, in an evil hour, too fatally succeeded.

Poor Mr. Harold, not in the least suspecting the nature of their intimacy, was really pleased at the countenance shewn to Mr. Fransham by his wife; every mark of complacency shewn to that gentleman, he looked upon as a particular instance of her affection for himself: but one evening, returning from a visit which he had paid alone to a gentleman in his neighbourhood, considerably sooner than he was expected, upon going up to Mrs. Harold's chamber, he found the door locked, and fancied he heard her voice and Mr. Fransham's in a very familiar sort of conversation. An instinctive kind of terror struck instantly to his heart: he knocked at the door; which not being immediately unlocked, he burst it open, and, just as he entered, saw his perfidious friend escape out of the window into the garden. Frantic at this sight, the violence of his passion prevented him from pursuing the infamous villain, by whom he had been so barbarously wronged: he gazed in a violent fit of horror for some time upon his wife, who sat trembling on the bed-side; then running to a case of pistols, which were kept generally in the bed-chamber, he snapped one of them at Mrs. Harold, and ran immediately after to find the partner of her crime; but Mr. Fransham, knowing Mr. Harold's temper too well to stay within his reach, made such good use of his time, that he was quite out of danger before the other began the pursuit.

Happily for Mrs. Harold, the pistol was not charged which was directed at her, though the fright threw her into a swoon: but recovering, and finding herself entirely safe, she thought it most prudent to retire to a friend's house for

a little time, till a reconciliation could be effected with her husband. Here she remained for about a month, and tried every means of obtaining his forgiveness, but to no purpose; and the following letter, which he wrote to her in his cooler moments, put a total stop to any future attempts of that nature.

BY what name shall I distinguish you? or how shall I be able to write to a woman with any degree of temper, whom I am born everlasting to curse and detest? Can you, Maria, be mean enough to think of living with a man whom you have covered with disgrace, or bear the eternal memento which his presence must give you of your own? That I did love—But wherefore do I dwell upon a circumstance which I must endeavour to obliterate for ever? or mention the sincerity of my passion, when I think upon the reward it has met?

If I expect to be forgiven myself in the next world, Maria, you conjure me to pardon your offences in this. What a wretch must the man be who excuses a crime which the eye of all acquitting Mercy cannot look upon without horror! If there are particular crimes which we are taught to believe Heaven itself will not pardon, can we suppose that there are not injuries which it is impossible for human nature ever to over-look?—Forgive you, Maria!—oh that I could! My anguish would not be of that poignant nature which it is, could the baseness of your conduct ever be forgot. See me!—No. Fly me as far as earth can part us; for should we once meet, I will not answer but that moment may be our last. As for the villain!—I cannot name him!—to the most distant corner of the world I'll pursue him; he shall be an eternity a dying: and yet if he feels half of what I suffer, hell itself cannot possibly afflict him more. Distraction choaks me, I cannot proceed. If adultery!—if the violation of the most solemn vows given in the immediate presence of the living God, is pardonable above—I will not pray for your perdition. But should you again urge my temper by an insolent application for my pity, in some bitter moment of my soul, perhaps, I may be provoked to supplicate that the Divine Goodness may be as far from you as the compassion of the wretched.

FRANCIS HAROLD.

The

The sequel of the story is—Mrs. Harold, through shame and remorse, is pining at the house of a relation in the country, and supposed to be in a very declining situation. As for Fransham, he escaped over into France; but falling into a number of excesses, reduced himself to the necessity of the road; but being apprehended in his first robbery, will, in all probability, if he escapes death, be confined during life to the gallies. Mr. Harold is grown more composed, and all his friends are busied in keeping up his spirits, and with such

success, that it is hoped in a little time his tranquillity will be restored, especially as they all carefully avoid mentioning a single syllable of Mrs. Harold. We may conclude our little narrative with a few lines from Rowe's *Fair Penitent*—

By these examples are we taught to prove
What sad effects attend unlawful love.
Death, or some worse mischance, will soon
divide
The wretched bridegroom from his guilty
bride.
If you would have the nuptial union last,
Let virtue be the bond that ties it fast.

N^o V. SATURDAY, MARCH 12.

IT was a common expression of the late Bolingbroke's, that if he was but an' hour in the company of a stranger, and heard him speak but fifty words, he could tell the particular turn or bias of his temper. When I consider the general propensity of mankind to enhance the idea of their own characters, and reflect that there is a particular something in the opinion of every man which gives him an advantage over the rest of the world, I am inclined to believe that his lordship's declaration is not altogether so extraordinary as a person at first might possibly imagine it.

In people of understanding, the particular quality upon which they principally value themselves, is rather easier to be discovered than in those of ordinary capacities, because conversation taking a more liberal turn, furnishes a greater number of opportunities to draw it out. I was last night sitting with two or three friends, who are not a little esteemed in the literary world, when I immediately reflected upon Lord Bolingbroke's observation. One of them opened the discourse with a compliment to the abilities of Mr. Pope, and seemed intent to make that celebrated author the subject of conversation. Poetry he talked of as the first of all the sciences; and consequently hinted, that such as excelled in this were superior to the most eminent professors of any other. It is almost needless to tell, that my friend has himself published some pieces in this way of writing, which are universally admired; and that, while he was expatiating on the merit of Mr. Pope, he had a secret intention of reminding us of his own cha-

racter. This gentleman, though a very sensible man, carries his zeal for the poetical Muse a little too far: he looks upon every one with an eye of indifference who has not received some marks of that lady's favour; and very lately refused a woman of ten thousand pounds, who was passionately in love with him, for no other reason in life than because she left the room, about some domestic occurrence, while he was reading an imitation of one of Horace's odes, which he had written, it seems, that morning.

My poetical friend entertained us for some time; when a mathematical acquaintance turned the discourse upon Sir Isaac Newton: in a little time my good friend Dr. Nettletop beat Sir Isaac out of the field with Boerhaave; Mr. Longwind, the historian, however, quickly conquered Boerhaave with Rappin; and the wide field of history itself was not long after covered by Mr. Choleric, the politician, with the triumphs of his immortal King of Prussia.

But if so great a fondness of shewing the particular qualification wherein we excel, though it be a meritorious one, is deserving of our censure, how much more to be condemned are those sort of people, who build their reputation upon trifles of the most ridiculous nature, and are constantly taking up the time of every company they are admitted into, with recitals of no consequence to themselves, and no entertainment to any body else. My cousin Jack Babler gives me great offence this way: Jack particularly piques himself upon a very small stomach, and an unconquerable aversion to a buttock of beef. Hence,

wherever he goes, we are always sure of a dissertation upon eating: the smallness of his appetite is a never-failing source of conversation; and I have known him to take up two hours and a half to convince a large company that he has not eat a pound of meat in a fortnight. If by a revolution in his habit of body my poor cousin should unfortunately get a good stomach, he must resign all pretension to merit, and banish himself from society for the want of common conversation.

But the most extraordinary character I ever knew, that was not absolutely vicious, is my friend Sir Harry Whimsey's. Sir Harry has understanding, and yet he only uses it to be a fool; he has a fortune capable of providing all the pleasures of life, and yet he is never happy till he is compleatly miserable. Sir Harry, if he happens to be indisposed, is a little easy in his mind; but if he be really ill, it is then he experiences the highest satisfaction; his friends are all summoned, and with an air of

the utmost consequence told of his melancholy situation; how the pain in his head has torn him to pieces, and how he has not had a wink of sleep for three nights. When he finds any concern expressed for his condition, his pride begins to swell, and the notion of his own importance increases, in proportion to the pity of his friends, and the danger of his disorder. He has been a man of very little merit, however, these three years; for, being naturally of a good constitution, and not much addicted to intemperance of any nature, he has unhappily escaped the smallest indisposition.

The knowledge of these foibles in other people is of no advantage to us, unless they teach us to correct whatever may be amiss of the same nature in ourselves: the best of us have our little absurdities; for which reason, when we laugh at the peculiarities of our acquaintance, we should by no means neglect an examination into our own.

Nº VI. SATURDAY, MARCH 19.

AT a time when the whole kingdom is running mad with political disquisitions, it would be something hard if the Babler was not allowed to dwell upon the subject; but as he is very unlike the generality of his name-sakes, and dreads nothing so much as offending, he declares himself publicly a lover of truth, yet an advocate of no party, and sets up for the title of a good Englishman without being either a Whig or a Tory. Party distinctions are to him the most disgusting circumstances imaginable; and an intemperate zeal in the support of any faction, not only the most ridiculous commotion in society, but the most dangerous.

Sir Robert Walpole, who knew human nature as well as most people, has been very open and very honest upon this subject. I have a letter of his this moment before me, which has never yet appeared in print, and which will, I dare say, be no less a curiosity than an instruction to my readers. Sir Robert, I need not observe, had been for a long time the idol of the people, and was even committed to the Tower for too strenuous an assertion of their liberties. After

his interest had got the better of his patriotism, and that the fondness of fame had yielded to a passion for power, Sir Robert wrote the following letter to an intimate friend, who had reproached him for deserting the welfare of the public.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I Received your last with much satisfaction, though it contained some little acrimony on my conduct, and easily discovered the greatness of your esteem, notwithstanding it was blended so frequently with reproof.

Indeed, my dear friend, whatever colour my change of principles may wear, or however it may be considered by the generality of people, I have done nothing which every other man in the world would not have done in my situation. The very best of us are fond of greatness and power in our hearts; and however we may seem to despise either, the contempt never lasts a moment longer than the incapacity to obtain them. The friendship of a king, the command of his revenues, an opportunity of promoting our friends, and triumphing over our enemies, let me tell you,

you, are considerations of no very trifling nature; and the man, in my opinion, must be something more or less than human, wherever they are resisted. As I have not vanity sufficient to pretend to the first, I have sense enough to avoid the imputation of the latter; and am content with being nothing more than mortal, provided there are no malicious endeavours to make me any thing less.

Popularity, my dear friend, is nothing more than a step-ladder for ambition to reach the summit of place and preferment. We all have our prices; and if it is asked why I continued so long in an opposition to the court, my answer is this, they did not come up to mine. There is scarcely a member whose price I do not know to a single sixpence, and whose very soul I could not almost purchase at the first offer. The reason former ministers have been deceived in this matter is evident; they never considered the tempers of the people they had to deal with. I have known ministers so weak as to offer an avaricious rascal a star and garter; and to think of bribing a profuse young rogue, who set no value upon money, with a lucrative employment. I pursue methods as opposite as the poles, and consequently my administration must be attended with very different effects.

The people of England are, in general, a set of hot-headed fools, a parcel of sensible coxcombs, who, though perfectly able to examine the bottom of things, never judge farther than the surface. They know their rights and privileges inviolably safe, and yet they are never easy unless they think them in danger. It is no way difficult, therefore, for an aspiring commoner to take an advantage of this disposition, and to convert their ignorant solicitude for the public emolument entirely to the promotion of his own. A staunch opposition on two or three questions, right or wrong, to the court, gets him a name; half a dozen impudent unmeaning speeches, the admiration; and a treasonable pamphlet, the very souls of the people. Patriotic barbers toast him

in ale-houses, public-spirited shoemakers harangue for him in the streets, and free-born chairman and house-breakers sing forth his praises in every night-cellars within the bills of mortality. To quiet the minds of the mob, he gets a place. His own interest then obliges him to join the measures of the court. Upon this, the golden idol turns instantly to a calf, and leaves the field of preferment to somebody else, who is next to share the admiration, and, in due time, the curses of the vulgar. I remember I never thought my point compleatly carried till they clapped me in the Tower. I looked upon myself then as a made man, and the event fully justified the warmth of my expectations. In reality, I know no better friends to the constitution of this country, was it any way in danger, than this set of imaginary patriots: they struggle very heartily while they are at it, and the moment they are bought off, their preferment inspires others with a view of following their example, in order by the same means to attain the same ends; and thus we always find a succession of zealous patriots, who constantly advance the good of their country, by being so very strenuous about their own. But, to drop this subject, know, my dear friend, that the constitution of this country is so critically founded, that whatever affects the privileges of the people will, in a little time, endanger the prerogative of the crown: there is no separate interest for either to consult; and, in such a case, no man of sense will dream that the court can have the least notion of encroaching on the liberties of the subject.

You see, my dear friend, how freely I deal with myself; but, with me, patriotism goes for nothing. There is not this moment one patriot in the house; nor, indeed, is there the least necessity that there should. Do not deprive me of your good opinion for my candour, but go on to esteem me, and be assured I shall ever remain your most faithful friend,

R. WALPOLE.

N^o VII. SATURDAY, MARCH 26.

THE subject of my correspondent's letter in a former number, has procured me a very sensible complaint from an honest buckle-maker near Cornhill; and as it may serve by way of supplement, I think it most proper not to postpone the publication of it.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THE remarks which were made upon the dress of tradesmen, especially those of the younger sort, in your paper, from a correspondent I cannot help admiring very much; and the more so, as they come home to an instance in my own family, which has for a long time given me no little uneasiness.

You must know, Mr. Babler, that I am a plain pains-taking man, and neither more or less than a buckle-maker, near Cornhill: I have kept shop these twenty years, and brought up my family, consisting of a wife, one son, and a daughter, decently enough, though I say it myself; and, may be, have saved a trifle or so in my business; but that does not signify.

As every thing I have has been made by a close application to trade, I do not chuse appearing grander, Mr. Babler, than what becomes a person of my station; so that I confine myself to a suit or two of modest cloaths, and never put on my largest wig or my best ruffled shirt but of a Sunday. My wife, however, who had been formerly a lady's maid in the city, has higher notions; and as I do not chuse to quarrel with her, indulges herself in the gratification of them to as ridiculous a degree as my circumstances can allow. She would not come into the shop for the world without a sack or a French night-cap; and is sometimes so loaded with powder and pomatum, that the very smell is enough to take away the breath of my customers. I am never suffered to walk with her of a *working* day, because I am not sufficiently fine; nay, I am to esteem it as no trifling favour, if I am permitted to accompany her to the White Conduit House, or Islington fields, of a Sunday. You may be sure, Mr. Bab-

ler, that so hopeful an example has not escaped my children without imitation. My daughter, who is about nineteen, will put up with no less an appellation than *a young lady*; and my son, of course, thinks himself equally justified in supporting the title of *a young gentleman*: he quarrelled with my eldest apprentice the other morning for calling him by the familiar name of *Andrew*; and my daughter insisted upon turning away our last maid, because, in speaking of her to a third person, she did not say *Miss Dolly*. My wife's foolish indulgence is a still greater means of spoiling them. My daughter is always dressed out in a manner that renders her above doing any necessary article in the economy of a house, and superior to the condescension of serving in the shop. If a customer comes in, instead of asking what he wants, she orders the boy to call *his master*; for she would not stoop to send for *her father* to haggle about a twelve-penny knife, or a two-shilling pair of buckles. If she sits behind the counter, it is with a look of dignity and importance; and, to every new comer-in, puts on a new air, in order to enhance the idea of her consequence. My wife has lately bought her a pair of stone shoe-buckles; and I am hourly teased to death about purchasing her a metal watch. My son, Mr. Babler, is not a whit less affected than my daughter. I cannot see in what respect he is any way my superior; and yet, through his mother's means, he appears in a manner I never durst assume without being laughed at by all my acquaintance. He has his ruffled shirt on every day, and clean white stockings; has actually got a silk waistcoat with vellum button-holes, and a gold-laced hat, for Sundays. Is there any bearing this, Mr. Babler? But this is not the worst of it: as he improves in dress, the more he decreases in his manners; and the better he is supplied with the articles of finery, the less respectful he grows to those who provide him with the means. Lord, Sir! he considers me in no better light than a sort of an upper servant, who is obliged to consult the gratification of his pleasures, and to humour every turn and

and whim of his inclination. He scarce ever takes his hat off before me; and is so far from thinking that there is any thing out of character in his dress, that he is always exclaiming against the poverty of mine. In this he is supported both by his mother and his sister, the former always declaring I shame them with my nasty way of appearing, and my dutiful daughter wondering how her papa can dress in so shabby and pitiful

a manner. We are talked of all over the neighbourhood, Mr. Babler; and I am for ever rated at the Blue Posts for submitting to my wife's dominion in my family. Print this, pray do; shame may produce better effects than reason; and if it but makes my wife concerned at her behaviour, I shall possibly have every right to call myself yours,

ANDREW ANCHOR.

N^o VIII. SATURDAY, APRIL 2.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,
MINISTERIAL advocates having, in the present political dispute, taken a number of liberties with themselves, which they utterly condemn in other people; and exclaimed with uncommon energy against invective, at a time they were dealing out the most virulent abuse; I shall, for the entertainment of your readers, Mr. Babler, give a sort of *Political Dictionary*, in which their principal terms shall be explained, and in which I shall religiously confine myself to the ideas they always annex to each particular epithet, as it occurs in the course of their writings or conversation.

Disaffection to the king.] Whatever points out the grievances of the people, and endeavours to remove a weak or wicked minister.

A forcer of sedition.] One who tells honest truths, and is above the reach of ministerial influence and corruption.

The licentiousness of the press.] The candid method of representing the sufferings of the kingdom, and the speediest means of having them redressed.

The mob.] The Dukes of Devonshire, Grafton, Portland, and Newcastle; the Marquis of Rockingham; the Earls Temple, Hardwick, Bessborough, Ashburnham, &c. &c. the Lords Dudley, Monson, Sondes, &c. &c. Mr. William Pitt, Mr. James Grenville, Sir George Savile, Mr. Beckford, &c. &c.

An upright minister.] Lord Bute.

A man of superior excellence and virtue.] Ditto.

The firmest friend of the sovereign.] Ditto.

The truest lover of his country.] Ditto.

An advantageous peace.] Unnecessary concessions to our enemies, and putting them again in a capacity of cutting our throats.

An honourable peace.] Submitting to the demands of an enemy we had conquered; and resigning, without indemnification, what we had purchased with a profusion of treasure and blood.

A good subject.] A man with a bare backside, and a lover of the itch.

Prudence and economy.] An increase of taxes at the conclusion of an expensive war; and a lavishing that treasure upon profligate favourites, which should be applied to discharge the public debts of the kingdom.

The faith of the nation.] A desertion of the King of Prussia, our ally, at a time that France had made stipulations in favour of his most immediate enemies.

The encouragement of genius.] A provision for Hume, Home, Mallock, and other Scotch writers, who had drawn their pens in favour of a Scotch minister.

Subversion of the constitution.] To prevent the machinations of tyranny and despotism, and to maintain the purity of the laws and the liberty of the subject.

Oeconomy.] A pitiful manner of furnishing the royal kitchen, and a profuse method of expending the money of the kingdom.

Contempt of the opposition.] A silence when uncontrovertible facts are advanced, and a prosecution where any thing is uttered contrary to the chicanery of the laws, however just it may be in reason.

Ministerial

Ministerial moderation.] A discharge of every person put into office during the administration of the Duke of Newcastle, or Mr. Pitt, not even excepting a fifty pound salary.

Laws agreeable to the constitution.] Acts which are passed by ministerial influence, and have an immediate tendency to encroach upon the freedom and property of the subject.

The sense of the kingdom.] The dictates of an arbitrary and all-grasping minister, and the despicable arguments of his mercenary advocates.

Liberty and property.] A forcible entry of our houses by messengers at midnight, and an imprisonment of our persons without either information or evidence.

The good of the public.] A destructive excise-bill, and an arbitrary manner of levying taxes, without any shadow of pretence, or colour of necessity.

A bloody and expensive war.] The exercise of a just revenge upon our enemies, and the reduction of settlements which would amply reimburse our expence, if we had but spirits or understanding to have kept them.

Prudence and humanity.] A mean submission to the offers of an enemy reduced; and a pitiful apprehension of a reverse of fortune, when that enemy, so far from being in a condition of attacking us, was utterly incapable of defending himself.

Justice and impartiality.] A captain's commission to a child of not ten years old, while many who had ventured their lives in the service of their country were perishing for bread.

Reward of merit.] Places and pensions to such as had scandalously sold the interest of their country, and supported the tyranny of a presumptuous minister.

Scandal and detraction.] A regard for the name of Englishman, and an aversion to the itch.

Arrogance and presumption.] The smallest dissent from the opinion of an insolent Scot, and a refusal of that implicit submission to an over-bearing minister, which was never expected nor deserved by his master.

Aversion to popularity.] An affected contempt in a minister for a people, by whom he was conscious of being justly and generally despised.

A regard for the dignity of the Crown.] A poor pretence for practising the most detestable means to trample on the liberties of the people.

Ministerial resignation.] A fallacious method of escaping from the hatred of the public, and an artful contrivance in a favourite to make others responsible for measures which are guided by himself.

A man above avarice.] One who affects a total disregard for money; but, however, procures the most lucrative places for himself, and raises his beggarly relations over the heads of the deserving to the first offices of the kingdom.

A man of the utmost wisdom and virtue.] A minister who embroils a whole kingdom in dangerous dissensions, and treads upon that people who taught him the difference between penury and affluence; the distinction between opulence the most splendid, and indigence the most extreme.

Decency and candour.] A submission to the arrogant commands of a haughty, and an approbation of the destructive measures of a worthless, favourite.

An enemy to his country.] Any person in the least solicitous to preserve it from destruction.

Nº IX. SATURDAY, APRIL 9.

I Do not know any thing in the present age which has done such essential disservice to the cause of virtue and morality as the ridiculous affectation of wit, which prevails in almost every order of the people. Under a pretension to this quality, the most blameable levities become universally admired; and, what is much worse, the most dange-

rous of all our vices are set up as a standard for public imitation. To destroy the tranquillity of a deserving friend by some occasional stroke of impertinence, is, now-a-days, sufficient foundation for the character of a wit; and we frequently reckon that person as possessed of extraordinary abilities, who bids defiance to the mandates of his God:

There

There is one great unhappiness attending this propensity to fashionable wit; which is, that men of the best sense very often think themselves obliged to give in to the general opinion of their acquaintance; and, in order to merit the esteem of the world, submit to the very errors which their own understanding must naturally lead them to condemn. Among the number of my own friends who are unhappily victims to the world in this respect, I cannot, without the utmost concern, reflect upon poor Ned Frailby.

When Ned came from the university, which was at the age of nineteen, he had a doating old grandmother, who supplied him plentifully with money, and by whose fondness he was enabled to indulge all the luxurious depravities incident to his years. Upon his first coming to town, he was introduced as a hopeful young fellow at a society of wits, who frequented a fashionable coffee-house in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. Unacquainted with the world, their manners were perfectly new to our young adventurer; and it was not without infinite pain he heard obscenity and execration form the principal part of the first night's discourse. Notwithstanding this, there was a something in the company, which produced an involuntary attachment; and he was overheard whispering to the friend who introduced him, that it was a pity such and such gentlemen were not less immoral, for he looked upon them as excessively agreeable.

There is, in the human mind, a natural promptitude of imitating manners wherever we happen to like a man. This was poor Ned's case; in less than a week an oath was not altogether so shocking; and it was rather too reserved for a young fellow to banish an innocent freedom in talking of women, that suited with his years and constitution. There is no necessity for circumstantial particularities; suffice it, that Ned, before the month was over, grew passionately fond of the character of a *wit*; and shewed, that in purchasing so honourable an appellation, he was utterly regardless of the means.

The first stroke of wit that procured him any reputation, was the overturning of his grandmother's coach in a little excursion to Richmond, where he insisted on mounting the coach-box, and

commencing driver. Our Phaeton, unable to manage the horses, drove against a mile-stone, upon which the carriage instantly gave a violent jerk, and pitched him headlong into a cucumber-bed on the road-side, where he was miserably cut with the glasses: the good old lady had her arm broke by the accident; and, what with the acuteness of the pain, and her terrors for her Neddy, a fever ensued, which carried her off in a fortnight. When he was able to come abroad, his next sally of wit was upon an unfortunate waiter, whose eye he knocked out with the head of a tobacco-pipe: this cost him two hundred pounds to suppress a prosecution, exclusive of a twenty pound annuity during the life of the sufferer. A duel with a Highland officer, for some reflections on brimstone, was his next exploit; after which he successively bred four riots at the playhouse, and carried off seven milliners apprentices within the purlieus of Covent Garden. It is remarkable, that when our modern men of wit endeavour at a character, they generally employ themselves in proving their spirit; and the moment they arrive at the pitch of *doing* what they think proper, the itch of heroism naturally disappears, and they content themselves with *saying* what they please. This is exactly Ned's case; finding the reputation of his courage sufficiently established, he rests satisfied with disturbing every conversation he overhears, and has humility enough to be no more than very impertinent whenever he engages in an argument.

At the playhouse I have heard him affect a horse-laugh in the most distressing passage of a tragedy; and at a concert I never knew him pleased with the performers till he had put them entirely out. Fatigued with this insipid round, his wit has taken a different turn; religion, and it's members, are now the objects of his ridicule; and possibly, from some passages in his life, having reason to fear that there is another world after this, he always endeavours to convince his acquaintance that there is not. Unhappy Ned Frailby, setting out a fashionable wit, he has sunk into a real infidel; and, to gain the admiration of a blockhead he should despise, has forfeited the favour of his God. The people who wish him best can only pity him; but where he is not personally known, he is looked upon

as what he is: yet Ned has a thousand good qualities; his ear is never turned from the complaint of sorrow, nor his bounty withheld from the tear of distress: he is the best of masters, the kindest of landlords, and the warmest of friends. He has a fine fancy, a sound understanding, and a benevolent heart; but a passion for admiration has undone him, and he is an amiable reprobate at best.

To such a picture there needs no

comment: let any man of wit clap his hand upon his heart, and examine if he has not all of Ned's bad qualities; and then let him try how far they are extenuated by the good. If, upon examination, he should appear to have a great deal of the first, and very little of the latter, he is really a very wretched being; and we may very fairly cry out, with the poet—

Hic niger est, dunc tu Romane cavae.

N^o X. SATURDAY, APRIL 16.

THE following letter, which has been communicated by a personage of the first distinction, having something in it so applicable to the present times, we fancy our readers will, for that reason, readily accept it for the entertainment of the day, were they even to pay no regard to the extraordinary merit and uncommon reputation of the author.

ORIGINAL LETTER
FROM DEAN SWIFT TO MR. POPE.
(NEVER BEFORE MADE PUBLIC.)

DEAR POPE,

I Am wonderfully pleased with the publication of your Ethic Epistles, not only on account of their poetical and moral excellence, but on account of that hearty aversion to Ministers and Courts, which breathes through several of the passages: perhaps I am the more taken with your sentiments on this head, because they are a sufficient authority for some opinions advanced by myself; and, you know, we are always certain of allowing other people's notions to be of weight and importance when they bear any conformity to our own.

I do not know how it is, but I never liked a Minister in all my days. Our friends Oxford and Bolingbroke I had a sincere value for in their private stations; but in their public capacities I looked upon them both (and you know I have said it to their faces) as little better than a couple of r—ls. This regard to their abstracted merit as individuals, has frequently led me to support tenets diametrically opposite to my

principles; and I have often engaged as a champion for the conduct of the ministers, because I had a cordial affection for the integrity of the men. There is such an honest openness in Harley, and so apparent an ingenuousness in St. John, that I am attached to their interest in spite of my teeth, and left, while I labour to rescue them from the name of scoundrels in their offices, to sink under the weight of the damn'd appellation myself.

In fact, Pope, I believe it impossible for any minister to be an honest man. There are fifty thousand trap-doors, from the very nature of his office, in which it is next to impossible but his integrity must tumble. One right honourable r—l or other has eternally some strumpet to provide for, or some cuckold to recommend, in preference to the claims of real worth, and the pretensions of the truly deserving; not to mention any thing of a minister's own friends, his implements and dependants, who all naturally expect to be provided for in course. Thus situated, a man at the head of affairs is obliged very frequently to overlook the solicitations of services and merit, as I have this moment observed, and exposes himself to the resentment of many disappointed levee-danglers, from an utter impossibility to provide for all. Hence a number of enemies are certain of attacking him at every quarter; and, as the battery in some places may be justly enough levelled, the report must be heard without end.

But as wealth and power are always sure of finding advocates, we never see a minister without a number of literary mercenaries employed in his defence, to refute

refute the arguments of malice, or to evade the accusations of truth; to knock on the head with the hammer of plump contradiction, or to puzzle by a fallacious representation of facts. These worthy gentlemen, did they really consider the true interest of the minister, would never endeavour at any thing like a fair dispute. A round lye ought to be given to every assertion prejudicial to his reputation; and this would produce such a number of replies, that the public would soon give up the discussion of a point which faddled them with a heavy expence. A swarm of pamphlets the lower orders have not the ability to purchase, and the higher have not the leisure to read: hence a debate that occasions a number of publications must insensibly die away, and the principal sufferer be the unfortunate bookseller; for seldom, very seldom, has the proprietorship of a six-penny touch fal'en to the share of *any regularly bred author*.

People may talk what they will of the infringement which ministerial artificers have made upon the liberty of the subject, but in my opinion the Stamp Office is the most dangerous; the duty laid there upon all publications, is a flagrant attack upon the liberty of the press; and by choking up the only channel which the public have of setting forth their grievances, cuts off the most probable means of having them redressed: it is, in fact, the most masterly stroke of ministerial cunning which I can remember; for let a secretary be never so bad a man, one half of his villainy passes the notice of the world, because few people are willing to buy a knowledge of it at an exorbitant price.

The general plea which is used by ministerial advocates, and a plea which

I myself have used with success, is, that an attack upon the minister is an affront upon the crown; and that there is no accusation laid at the door of a secretary, that is not an indirect reflection upon the king. This is a pleiant way of reasoning, to be sure; for, by the express declaration of our laws, an English prince is a piece of royal infallibility, incapable of doing wrong: as this position is universally admitted, it must consequently follow, that let us spatter as we please, not a bit of dirt can stick upon the monarch; or even if it could, would the monarch be an honest or a sensible man, to be offended, if it was apparently evident he was in the wrong? Duty and reverence is all stuff, Pope; the prince who is offended at *cenure*, ought never to furnish a cause for it; and the king who would exact the obedience, ought to deserve the affection, of his people. This is the voice of reason; and the prince who is above listening to it, may possibly be feared; but I'll stake my salvation that he never can be loved.

The position that a king can do no wrong, Pope, must either tax the English nation with great injustice, or great inconsistency. If a king can do no wrong, why was King James the Second banished? And if a king can do wrong, why the plague are we constantly affirming that he *cannot*? Either way we stand self-condemned: in the first place, we must be very wicked men, if the position holds; and very foolish ones in the second, if it does not. But inconsistency is our prevailing characteristic; and if we are not set down as a nation of scoundrels, we must think ourselves pretty easy under the appellation of fools. I am, dear Pope, &c.

J. SWIFT.

Nº XI. SATURDAY, APRIL 23.

AMONG the variety of correspondents who favour me with their pieces, a humourous gentleman has sent me the following little narrative, by way of *Essay on Happiness*, which I shall make no apology for laying before my readers.

TO THE BABLER,

I Am going to advance a position which the whole world has been intimate with, since it's first creation; yet, what is not a little odd, a position that one half of our modern authors think

as necessary to discuss, three or four times a week, as if we were under the greatest doubt of it's truth, or utterly unacquainted with it's rectitude. This position, Sir, is neither more nor less than the imperfection of all human enjoyments, and the just disregard which should be shewn to every possession of this life, by such as have a proper solicitude for the happiness of the next.

I am an old fellow, Matter Babler, very near sixty-five; and when I look back upon the various occurrences of life, and recollect the objects which principally attracted my attention from the cradle to the present hour, I cannot help crying out with the poet—

A phantom of pleasure, like happiness drest,
From the cradle we're taught to pursue;
Yet our hope is but vanity, take it at best,
And our wisdom but vanity too.

When I was about ten years of age, Sir, the *summum bonum* of all worldly felicity was a holiday from school, and a pennyworth of marbles. How have I envied a chimney-sweeper's apprentice basking in the sun, in all the amplitude of idleness and rags, when I considered him as unrestrained by the tyranny of some surly pedagogue, or enabled to cry—‘Fair up,’ at a gaine of *slap*. As I grew up, Sir, my attention was imperceptibly engaged to amusements, rather more manly, but, however, less innocent. Many a good time have I been diverted by fastening a rope across our street in a dark night, to tumble unsuspecting passengers in the dirt; and many a cat have I tied to the knocker of a street-door, to throw the first servant wench into fits, by whom it might be occasionally opened: the more mischief on these pretty little frolics, the better amusement; and I remember never to have received so much real satisfaction, as being the cause in one night of an old woman's eye being scratched half out, and a man's breaking his leg.

At seventeen, however, I began to look on amusements of this nature with an eye of disgust; my time was now wholly taken up with an attendance upon every little girl in our neighbourhood; and between that age and twenty-five I had the happiness of ruining nineteen. You can by no means conceive the transports I felt, Mr. Babler, to survey so many victims to my per-

sonal merit and address: often has my heart exulted at the tears of some poor deluded innocent, my satisfaction being always good-naturedly proportioned to the distress which I caused; and once I looked upon myself as the happiest of all human beings, three young ladies with whom I had been particular, being fortunately discarded on that account by their friends, and turned out of doors.

At thirty, Sir, I was married to a woman whose person was far from being agreeable, but whose fortune had too many charms to be withheld. My ambition now was directed to the purchase of a fine stud of cattle, and a magnificent country-house. My wishes were gratified; but in less than three months I sold off the one, and seldom put my foot into the other, unless some very extraordinary circumstance indeed made my appearance absolutely necessary on the spot.

The mutability of my pleasures still continuing, Sir, I was successively fond of the reputation of a hard drinker, the character of a desperate rider, the fame of a good marksman, the glory of a billiard player, and once was miserable a whole twelve months on account of losing a rubber at Dutch Pins. I have eat a raw beef-steak out of pride, whistled for a wager with a very honest butcher in Newgate Market, and thought it a piece of heroism to be locked up all night with the remains of a murderer, dissected by the surgeons. In short, Sir, there is scarcely a fashionable article of reputation that I have not acquired; but the hey-day of the spirits being long since over, and reason beginning to reflect upon pursuits which nature is no longer able to continue, I look upon every former object of my admiration with a real concern, and an insuperable contempt: and yet, Sir, at this age I have my enjoyments, which I cannot help pursuing with an avidity truly ridiculous. I pique myself not a little on smoaking half a dozen pipes of an evening; and have lately contended for the honour of being the best politician at our club, in a long argument with Doctor Dozely the parson about *Magna Charta*, and the natural rights of a free-born Englishman. Yet, Sir, is all this blaze of reputation worth living for? I blush to be diverted by such trifles, but can by no means throw them off.

off. I am, in short, a convincing proof, Sir, of Solomon's sensible observation—‘ that all is vanity and vexation of spirit ;’ being perfectly sensible that no happiness, or enjoyment of this life,

can be at all equal to conscious satisfaction of preparing for the unutterable transports of the next.

I am, Sir,

THOMAS GIDDY.

Nº XII. SATURDAY, APRIL 30.

UNIVERSAL soever as the spirit of amour may be, and great soever as the countenance may be which it receives from the polite world, there is no one source from which such a number of calamities are produced, nor any one spring which pours in such a variety of misfortunes upon society. Unhappily, in this gay age, the depravity of manners has arisen to so enormous a degree, that it is in some measure necessary for a young fellow to give into the fashionable follies, and practise vices to which he has a real abhorrence, if he would establish the character of a man of taste, or shew himself tolerably well acquainted with the world.

In the prosecution of modern amour, more than in any other vice, there are allurements which very few think themselves capable of resisting, or even chuse to resist, if they could. A man finds his vanity tickled, as well as his inclination gratified, in the seduction of unwary innocence ; and, abstracted from the transport resulting from possession itself, the generality of our sex think, with an infinity of satisfaction, upon their own accomplishments, and suppose they must be possessed of some extraordinary qualifications, when a woman shews her sensibility of them at no less a price than her everlasting disgrace.

The same vanity which impels the one sex to a pursuit of unwarrantable amour, is the very reason why the other is so seldom offended, when they even know that a man's design is repugnant to honour and virtue. The pleasure arising from the adoration paid to a pretty face, casts a veil over the infamous intention of him who offers it ; and the generality of women are content to be addressed upon the footing of strumpets, provided the offence which is offered to the purity of their hearts is mingled with a well-turned compliment to the beauty of their persons. Hence, actuated by vanity, and perhaps rendered weak

from constitution, the amiable idiot of the softer sex is immediately undone, and the remorseless libertine of ours feels no compunction in the ruin of her character, since the monstrous depravity of general opinion induces him to consider it as an enhancement of his own. Nay, this vanity on the side of the ladies has sometimes been so unaccountably absurd, that two sisters have quarrelled about the addresses of an agreeable spoiler ; and contended, with an inflexible sedulity, for the honour of sacrificing their peace of mind in this world, and endangering their everlasting happiness in the next.

Independent of the lamentable consequences in point of character, which on the woman's part most commonly attend a deviation from virtue, the effects which such a deviation has upon her spirits is generally fatal. There is a softness in the female mind, so very susceptible of tender impressions, that it is next to impossible the idea of a favoured lover should ever be erased ; and as it is equally impossible that the libertine professed can confine himself to any single attachment, the woman must necessarily be wretched when she knows that those vows and protestations are indiscriminately paid to the whole sex, which she once vainly imagined were engrossed by herself. Besides this, there is an ingrateful sort of indolence in the temper of the man, which renders him indifferent in proportion to the study taken to please him ; and a spaniel-like kind of fondness in the disposition of the woman, which increases her tenderness in proportion as the experiences his indifference or abuse. I seldom or never heard of a man who behaved commonly civil to a woman who had granted him all she could grant, nor knew a woman once forget a man by whom she was destroyed. I have an elegy before me, in which a lady, ruined and forsaken, paints the general situation of the sex in such

such circumstances, with no little sensibility; and as the performance has much merit, I shall make no excuse for transcribing a stanza or two, and submitting them to the judgment of my readers.

O That no Virgin would incline an ear
To wild professions from inconstant
youth,
But nobly scorn a sentiment to hear,
That seems to laugh at innocence and
truth.

For if no just displeasure she reveals,
Time will convince her, dearly to her cost,
That step by step the sweet delusion steals,
Till Fame and Honour are for ever lost.

The female mind may bid it's terrors cease,
Who never made her softer feelings known,
Nor fear a thought destructive to her peace,
While Prudence tells her to conceal her
own.

But if, alas! in some unguarded hour,
From this advice she madly should depart,
She gives her lover an unbounded pow'r
To wound her honour, and to break her
heart.

In vain the fair, to such a crisis drove,
In sense or soul superior will confide;
For when has reason triumph'd over love,
Or inclination been subdu'd by pride?

Say, Heav'n! to whom my pray'r is now
address'd,
Why are we subject to so hard a fate,
That, tho' the easy fondness of our breast
Be still abus'd, we never wish to hate?

For ev'n this moment, when my grief has stole
The aching tribute of a falling tear,
I feel a foolish something round my soul
Declare the soft betrayer is too dear.

Alas! the anguish I am doom'd to prove,
From real passion only can begin;
For this sad drop proceeds from slighted love;
And pardon, Heav'n, no sorrow for the sin.

But, O ye powers! remove each softer trace
That calls his faithless image to my eyes;
For as I know him infamous and base,
It is but just I hate him and despise!

I shall conclude this paper with a letter sent by a young fellow of my acquaintance, lately married to a most ami-

able woman, to a lady who officiated as bride-maid to his wife, and who was weak enough to make him some overtures in a little time after the wedding-day.

MADAM,

UNFASHIONABLE soever as it may be for a gentleman to have any notion of his moral duties, and inelegant soever as it may be in a husband to pay the least attention to his word as a man, I must take the liberty of informing you, that I have too just a regard for the vows which I have lately given to an excellent woman, in the presence of the living God, to think of violating them, by listening to any insinuation of tenderness in others of the sex. And suffer me, Madam, to add, that I have not such a cruelty of temper as to destroy the eternal quiet of a deserving lady, which must inevitably be the case in her moments of reflection, let the passions tell her what they will when the reason is more off it's guard. I have such an opinion of you, Madam, as to suppose an intercourse of an illicit kind would plant daggers in your bosom, when that fine sense of which you are mistress had leave to exert itself; and that, however the guilty commerce might be secreted from the knowledge of the world, that recollection would harrow up your soul, when you whispered it to your own.

Think, Madam, of your inexpressible beauty, your exalted merit, and your elevated rank; nor suffer an unhappy prepossession to lead you into any error repugnant to the regard which is due to your own reputation, the honour of your sex, and the happiness of your friends; and, believe me, that an attention to this advice, whatever you may think of my behaviour at present, will one day oblige you to confess, that I am very much your real friend and most obedient servant.

Should any husband be in my friend's situation, the advice I give him will be a line from an old fashioned book, called the Testament— Go thou, and do likewise.

Nº XIII. SATURDAY, MAY 7.

HAVING taken the liberty in one of my former Papers to publish a **POLITICAL DICTIONARY**, which was communicated to me by a personage of eminence in the literary world, whose friendship would do me the greatest honour if it was not a sort of vanity to reveal his name; I shall now lay before my readers a **VOCABULARY** of a more general nature, written by the same hand; which, I presume, will be no way disagreeable to such as remember the *Political Dictionary*, as there was scarcely a periodical production in the British dominions which did not immediately take it in.

Religion.] A ridiculous composition of unfashionable ordinances, instituted with no other design than to check every laudable impulse of vice and immorality, and calculated for no other purpose than to destroy the very essence of a fine gentleman.

Generosity.] A pitiful under-bred promptitude to reward the merit of the deserving; like

Humanity.] Which is nothing more than a childish washiness of nature at the sufferings, and an inclination to remove the misfortunes, of other people.

Gratitude.] A narrow-minded despicable remembrance of benefits received, and a scandalous desire of embracing every opportunity to return them.

Honour.] An idle regard to the dictates of friendship and benevolence, and a paltry adherence to the minutest law of order and morality.

Honesty.] A foolish regard to the sanctity of our words upon every occasion, and a servile abhorrence to the smallest trespass upon the property of our neighbours.

Courage.] A low-minded aversion of brutality to such as, from situation in life, must not presume to resent a horse-whipping, or complain at the loss of an eye; and a silly desire of avoiding all quarrels but such as relate to the honour of our king, or the glory of our country.

Decency.] A mean observation of common civility, and an infamous sup-

pression of oaths and obscenity in the presence of the ladies.

A tradesman.] A superior sort of coach-horse, created entirely for the convenience of the great, without either passions, resentment, understanding, or inclination.

Unpardonable impudence.] An humble solicitation for a person's own property, and a prudent concern for the maintenance of our wives and children.

Pride and prodigality.] The smallest distaste to poverty and rags, and the least inclination to a light-coloured shirt.

Debt.] A word under which persons of fashion have a right to rob the honest and industrious, without any fear of suffering from the laws of the kingdom, or the reproach of their acquaintance.

Transgression of the law.] An exertion of that natural right, which every man has to a hare or a partridge belonging to his own grounds, and which destroy both his corn and grass by the authority of parliament.

Liberty and property.] An indispensable necessity of keeping game for other people to kill, with pains and penalties of the most arbitrary kind, if we think of appropriating the minutest article to the use of our own families.

A free-born Englishman.] One who is continually bragging of liberty and independence, when he has neither will nor property of his own; and laughs at the wretchedness of other countries, while he himself is indulged with no other privilege than the right of nominating the person by whom he chuses to be enslaved.

Magna Charta.] An idle word made use of by the populace, signifying a natural right of being governed by laws which they constantly suffer to be trampled on, and an inherent claim to the possession of those privileges which they have neither sense or spirit enough to possess.

A secretary of state.] A great officer in whom crimes are no crimes, and who, by a political species of infallibility, can exercise

exercise acts of oppression, without ever dreading the rod of correction, or regarding the poignancy of general re-proof.

The people of Ireland.] A noble and spirited nation, inviolably attached to us by every tie of friendship and esteem; and who, on every occasion, hazard both their lives and fortunes in our defence; yet to whom we constantly make such just and grateful returns, as to omit no opportunity (however illegal and arbitrary) of beggaring them, though the ruin of their interest lays a manifest foundation for the destruction of our own.

The lords of the ocean.] The sensible and spirited people of Great Britain, who have a naval force considerably superior to all the other states of Europe put together, yet servilely do homage to a nest of little African pirates on the coast of Barbary, and pay a yearly tribute to a set of robbers, whom they ought to root out from the face of the earth.

An independent freeholder and lover of his country.] One who, on every election for a member of parliament, sacrifices his conscience to his convenience, sets up his dear country and his darling freedom to the best bidder, yet impudently finds fault with his representative for following so laudable an example, nor suffers any body to be a scoundrel, without reproach, but himself.

A peerage.] In former days, an honour conferred upon such as had rendered themselves conspicuous for their merit, and eminent for their virtues; but in the more modern ages it has been, in general, the wages of venality and corruption, and a distinction not to be purchased at a smaller price than everlasting infamy and disgrace.

A regard for the royal prerogative.] A worn-out pretence to infringe upon the laws, and a glaring design upon the privileges of the people.

National egotism or gasconade.] An unpardonable custom among the French of extolling their own merit to the skies, but never practised among the modest natives of this kingdom, though our presses are every moment teeming with 'sons of liberty, roast-beef and pudding, noble-minded Britons, and free-born Englishmen.'

A blessed martyr.] A perjured prince, who broke his coronation oath in the most material of all points, governed without a parliament, imprisoned his subjects for refusing to lend him money, commenced a false, villainous prosecution for high treason, against a most deserving nobleman, (the Earl of Bristol) whom he knew to be innocent, because that lord had impeached the Duke of Buckingham, whom he knew to be guilty; reduced his people to the dreadful necessity of taking up arms in their own defence, which produced the utmost confusion in religion and state; and by his shameful dissimulation when he was about to be restored, left it utterly impossible to confide in his honour, his humanity, or his oath; but drove the principal officers of the adverse party, in their own defence, to sit in trial upon their sovereign, and sentence him to death.—Truly, a very blessed martyr! Had this prince been a private man, who would have dared to say a word in his defence, though such a number of writers have pleaded his royalty, which ought to be an aggravation, as a considerable palliative, nay a total excuse, for his crimes?

Nº XIV. SATURDAY, MAY 14.

I Am never more diverted than when I see your grave important set of gentlemen, who would pass upon the world as men of extraordinary sagacity, running into a number of little petulancies, which they imagine themselves to be considerably above, and fretting at the veriest trifles we can think of, when they affect a superiority of resolution, which the most striking calamities of life are not sufficiently powerful to disturb.

This species of philosophers is generally composed of men who have much pride, or little understanding; and who, through a contemptible sort of vanity, make themselves not a little less than human, that they may have an opportunity of appearing in the eyes of the injudicious to be infinitely more. Of this cast was the elder Brutus, who passed sentence of death upon his own sons without the shadow of a pang; yet, at another

another time, knocked one of his servants down for putting a grain of salt too much in his broth.

But, without going so very far back for instances of this extraordinary class of mankind, my old friend Frank Surly is one of the most remarkable which it has ever produced. Frank and I were bred together at Westminster; and before he was twelve years of age, he was distinguished from every other boy in the school by the uncommon moroseness of his temper, and his contempt of those punishments which the generality of his age and standing always held in the greatest dread. There were few lads in the whole school superior to Frank either in application or abilities; yet I have known him frequently inattentive and careless about his lessons, that we might see with how much fortitude he could bear to be flogged. Nay, if any of his intimates had been guilty of any roguish prank which deserved the discipline of the rod, he would often desire them to lay the blame on him, and suffer, with all the composure in the world, a hearty flagellation in their stead. Unhappily, however, upon one of these occasions, when Frank was going to be punished for some petty crime, which he begged might be laid to his charge, the lad who was really guilty of the fact, struck with his behaviour, went up to the master, and without disguise related the affair, acknowledged the fault, and declared he would rather be cut to pieces than see another suffer for an action which he had committed himself. The lad's generosity had an effect upon the master; nor was he without some surprize at the behaviour of Frank. He dismissed them both to their seats; and, to the inexpressible concern of the latter, never flogged him after. Frank finding he could have no opportunity of shewing his stoicism any longer, through downright pride, paid an application to his studies that in a little time made him the best scholar in the whole school; and resolving to be remarkable for the extremities of his behaviour, the moment the master had declared he would never gratify him with another whipping, he grew remarkably well behaved, and piqued himself upon keeping up a consequence and dignity in his actions, to prove that the fear of punishment had nothing to do in the reformation of his manners.

The same disposition which distinguished Frank in his earlier years, has all along rendered him conspicuous since his reach to maturity. As he and I still hold up an intimacy, whenever I go down into Oxfordshire, I pass a week at his house. The last time I was there, he was laid up with a very violent fit of the gout; and whenever the pain was at an extremity, he would converse with unusual cheerfulness, or divert himself with one of the songs which were in vogue when he and I were young. If any body pitied him, he instantly flew into a passion; but if you seemed to make slight of bodily anguish and infirmity, he shook you by the hand, and told you, you were a man of understanding. About ten years ago, my old friend married a most valuable woman, of whom he was passionately fond, and who returned his affection almost to madness. As their circumstances were affluent, this reciprocal regard, one would imagine, should have produced their mutual felicity—But far on the contrary—Frank was too proud to be happy; and as his love for Mrs. Surly was universally known to be excessive, he was never satisfied unless he treated her as the object of his hate. He only lived in her looks, and yet he has torn himself from her presence for three whole weeks; and so unaccountably headlong was he hurried by this ridiculous stoicism, that, upon her death, which happened in childbed, though his soul was tortured with all the anguish of consummate pity and distracted love, he went to the assembly an hour after her decease, and sat up—(a tear now and then straying down his cheek)—along with Colonel Tierce, Major Pi-quet, and Sir Oliver Ombre, at a party of whist.

A person so apparently steeled against the calamities of life, we should reasonably expect, would hold the little impertinencies or interruptions of it in the greatest contempt: but this is far from being the case with my friend Frank; a plait more or less in his shirt-sleeve will set him raving for an hour; and I remember that he shot a favourite dog one day, in the stable-yard, for leaping accidentally up and dirtying the skirt of his coat. It is impossible to enumerate the various inconsistencies of my poor friend's character. I once knew him set up a careless drunken fellow of a

D coachman,

coachman, who overturned him in a ditch, in a very handsome inn, three weeks after; and at another time discharge his footman, at a moment's warning, for wearing too little powder in his wig.

Were we to make an essay into human nature, and examine the lives of our modern philosophers with any degree of circumspection, we should find the principal number approach so very

near the standard of Frank Surly, that the account given of him will serve as no improper description of them all. The ridiculous light in which one of the most sensible is set, will, I hope, serve for as good an admonition as I can possibly give to this tribe of very important beings; and I shall think myself particularly happy if the foregoing picture is attended with any salutary effect.

Nº XV. SATURDAY, MAY 21.

I Did myself the pleasure, a few evenings ago, to call at the house of an old friend, with whom I have been intimate these thirty years, and for whom I have infinitely more than a common respect. An affair of arbitration had, however, called him abroad; and I found nobody at home but Miss Maria, his younger daughter, who is now the most lively picture of innocence and beauty which I ever saw, and closely bordering upon twenty-one. As I always avoid stiffening my conversation with the starch of antiquity, and constantly endeavour at appearing more ready to be instructed than to instruct, the young people are very fond of admitting me into their company; and there is scarcely a day that I have not an invitation or two from some of the most sprightly tea-tables in town; which is more, I fancy, than can be said by any other old fellow of sixty within the weekly bills.

On my enquiring for her papa, Miss Maria stepped out of the parlour, and seizing one of my hands, cried—‘ O Mr. Babler, is it you? I insist upon your coming in.’ Few entreaties are necessary to make a man do what he likes. I immediately assented, sat down, and passed two of the most agreeable hours I ever experienced in my whole life.

Our conversation, after turning upon a variety of topics, at last fell upon that divine part of our church-worship, in which the congregation sing praises to the Most High. ‘ If it is proper,’ says Maria, ‘ for a person of my years to speak of so important a subject as religion, and not too presumptuous for the petticoats to comment upon the worship of the church, I should think, Mr. Babler, that this part of our li-

turgy might be very much improved. Great complaints have been often made, that so small a number of the congregation join in the singing of psalms; and though I admit the neglect is highly unpardonable, and the censure extremely just, yet reformation would, in my opinion, be infinitely superior to reprobation; and I think every room for complaint might be removed by a proper suppression of the cause.

‘ The end of poetry and music, if I am right in my information, is to actuate upon the passions; and, in all religious composition, to raise the mind to an elevated desire of acknowledging the wonderful mercy and goodness of the divine Being. How far the hymns used in the established church for this purpose are from answering so salutary an end, it is no less painful than unnecessary to observe: in the versification of the very best psalms, all the rapture of the original text is lost, and in that the music should be no way superior to the poetry; there is hardly any one tune which can create the least emotion but sleep. In fact, Sir, the most trifling compositions, which are formed for the business of amusement, have twenty times more merit than those set apart for the service of religion; and infinitely greater pains are taken in the writing or setting of a Ranelagh ballad, than in a hymn to the honour of the living God.

‘ From what I have said, Mr. Babler, I would by no means infer, that either the poetical or musical part of our hymns should be light, trifling, or airy; but surely, Sir, the spirit of devotion would breathe considerably stronger in these pieces, and have a

much

much greater effect, if an author of reputation should give us a fine versification of the psalms, and a master of eminence should receive proper encouragement to see them exquisitely set. We have a number of tunes, plaintive, solemn, and enchanting, to a miracle; which are nevertheless as familiar as they are charming, and calculated to bewitch the careless and inattentive to a sense, to a passion for that duty which they now treat with a lifeless indifference, or an insupportable neglect. Religion, Sir, by this means, would become fashionable; and it would be deemed no longer inelegant for a fine lady, or a fine gentleman, to join in the praises of their God.

Lord, Mr. Babler, how can you have patience to hear me chatter so much! but I shall not trespass on your patience much longer. Mr. Wellworth (who, you know, visits us every day) and I were talking on this very subject a few evenings ago; and as he has really a sweet taste for poetry, I took the liberty of requesting he would

write me a hymn, whether penitential or thanksgiving, I left to himself. He called on me this morning, and brought it in his hand. I think it mighty pretty, and shall be very happy if my opinion should receive such a sanction as yours, Mr. Babler. Mr. Wellworth read it to me with great sensibility; and I own I thought he never looked so well in all his life.'

Some how or other my eye encountered with Miss Maria's at the end of this speech; she seemed conscious; and on my observing that Mr. Wellworth was an excellent young man, she reddened excessively, and seemed at a stand for words. As I would not confuse her by any means, I shifted the conversation; but she resumed it immediately, and said—' Well, Mr. Babler, you must give me your sentiments on this little production; here it is,' continued she, taking it out of her pocket-book—and here—no, not here, but in the next number, I shall present it, with something else of consequence which it occasioned, to my readers.

Nº XVI. SATURDAY, MAY 28.

IN my last I promised my readers a Hymn; and as I would by no means be worse than my word, or delay their expectations, I give it without further introduction.

HYMN.

THE lark, now high soaring in air,
Salutes the first blush of the morn,
And the roses new incense prepare,
To breathe on the dew-dropping thorn;
Fresh feelings instinctively spring
In the steer, as he turns up the clod;
And creation itself seems to sing,
In the honour and glory of God.

II.

In what sensual mazes with-held,
Is man now unhappily lost!
In the rage of what passion impell'd,
On the sea of what vice is he tost?
O! instantly let him proclaim,
What the herbage all tells on the sod;
And if gratitude cannot, let shame,
Awake to the praises of God.

III.

The eye of some maid in despair,
Does his perjury fatally dim?
Or some breast does he cruelly tear,
That beats, and beats only for him?

All swift as the lightning's keen blaze,
Let him humble before the dread rod,
Nor join so unhallow'd in praise,
To the honour and glory of God.

IV.

Some laws does he madly defy,
Which the BEING OF BEINGS commands!
The bolt ready lifted on high,
Shall dash him to dust as he stands:
In thunder Omnipotence breaks,
Fall prostrate, O wretch! at his nod;
See Earth to her center deep shakes,
All dismay'd at the voice of her God!

V.

Life's road let me cautiously view,
And no longer disdain to be wise;
But redden such paths to pursue,
As my reason should hate or despise:
To crown both my age and my youth,
Let me mark where religion has trod;
Since nothing but virtue and truth
Can reach to the throne of my God.

When I had done reading, Miss Maria demanded my opinion of this performance, which I could not but praise very much. I told her, however, that the thought of concluding every stanza with the name of the Deity was bor-

rowed from Eve's Hymn in the Death of Abel; though I could not think of making any comparison, pretty as that hymn was, with this of Mr. Wellworth's. The young lady seemed vastly delighted at my commendation; and was beginning to make a verbal acknowledgment of her satisfaction, when her father's rap was heard at the door—My old friend entered the parlour with an air of mingled anger and dejection; and, instead of taking any notice of me, began at once upon his daughter—‘ So, ‘ Madam, this is fine information I have ‘ received!—What, you are under an ‘ engagement to Mr. Wellworth, are ‘ you? O Maria! Maria! ’

The secret was now out; and I found my suspicions of Miss Maria's attachment had considerably more than a tolerable ground. The poor girl stood quite confounded, and seemed utterly incapable of making a reply. As I saw nothing culpable in her regard for a worthy young fellow, I took upon me to intercede in her behalf; and at last reduced her father to the temper I could wish. I found a disparity of fortune was the only objection which the old gentleman had to his daughter's choice; for though my friend has as benevolent a heart as any man alive, yet he has the caution of all old fellows, and keeps a strict eye on the main chance. When

I had brought him to some degree of good-humour, I took an opportunity of turning the conversation, and read him the foregoing hymn. He was charmed with it, and asked me if I knew the author. ‘ Yes,’ says I, ‘ Mr. Wellworth.’—‘ Fore God!’ returned he, ‘ though I do not approve of his connection with my daughter, I am mightily taken with his works.’ This was all I wanted—‘ And pray, my good Sir,’ answered I, ‘ which is it more for your credit and your child's happiness, to bestow her on a deserving young man, whom she loves, and you cannot but admire, or to run the precarious issue of matching her with one, who, though he may have twice Mr. Wellworth's fortune, either may not have sense or inclination to reward either her merit, or your goodness, as he ought? You can settle them both, if not splendidly, at least elegantly, in the world; and, my life for it, in a year or two, you would not change your son-in-law for the Indies.’ I saw my old friend was struck with the justice of the case; yet still he seemed desirous of being persuaded to act as he knew he ought—I indulged him; and Saturday last he and I obtained a special licence; and, to the inexpressible happiness of the young folks, got them married that morning.

N^o XVII. SATURDAY, JUNE 4.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

AS I find it so very customary for people of all denominations to give a sketch of their lives, and to publish any particular instances of folly, or extraordinary turns of fortune, to the world; I take the liberty of sending you a portrait of myself; in which, abstracted from it's being a striking likeness, I shall claim no merit, unless it be allowed a general one.

I am the only son of a tradesman, who died about five years ago in the city, Mr. Babler, and left me in very handsome circumstances. My father had a common-council sort of pride about him, which aspired at bringing up his son a gentleman, and an ambition of making him carry an air of protection, while the most rigid oeconomy

was observed in his expence. I have been tricked out, Sir, in the very pink of city finery, a laced waistcoat and a bag-wig, at a time that I was scarcely allowed a sufficiency to pay my club at the Horseshoe and Magpie; and talked about tavern bills and supper, when half a guinea has been the extent of my finances for a whole week.

Upon the death of old Squaretoes, Mr. Babler, I found myself possessed of ten thousand pounds; and scarcely got a wink of sleep, during a whole month, my imagination was so perpetually haunted by the recollection of the sum. Habituated, however, to the sight of the money, I soon began to entertain a notion of laying a few hundreds elegantly out. With this view a carriage was instantly bespoke, an everlasting leave taken of all the streets between Temple Bar

Bar and Whitechapel, and a handsome apartment furnished at the other end of the town. The three formidable letters of E, S, and Q, were quickly added to my name; and having a strong inclination to be thought, I fancied in reality that I was, a fine gentleman.

The first six weeks after it came home, I spent at least fourteen hours a day in my coach. I appeared every where, saw every thing, and upon addressing days frequently invited some of the aldermen to a dish of chocolate. Indeed, one accident happened at my first going to court which made me not a little taken notice of: I never before had presumed to put on a sword, and being in the circle making my bow, it unfortunately got between my legs, and threw me on my face; in order to save myself from falling, I laid hold of an officer's skirt, who was just near me, and held it with such a force, that I dragged him with me down. The whole drawing-room was in a roar; the ladies tittered, the men burst into a horse-laugh, and even the face of majesty itself relaxed into a smile. As soon as possible I picked myself up, and retired; the officer did the same; and as I had been the cause of his disgrace, I made him a number of apologies, and took him home to dine. Before we parted, a reciprocal esteem was cordially expressed; and my new acquaintance talking something about a scarcity of money, he did me the favour to borrow fifty pieces, and gave me a positive assurance of coming to breakfast the next morning.

He was better than his word; he came, and brought half a dozen brother officers in his hand. We dined at Almacks; drank Burgundy till we were blind; scoured the streets, and beat the watch. The frolic was new to me, Mr. Babler; I was charmed with it; and behaved so well, that my companions honoured me with the name of a very honest fellow, and swore it was a damned pity I was so awkward with my sword.

These being the first gentlemen I ever had acquaintance with, it is no wonder I treated them with extraordinary re-

spect: bred up to an intercourse with none but sellers of linen, and dealers in packthread, I considered every man with a laced coat and cockade as infinitely my superior; and endeavoured, with a sedulity of an uncommon nature, to imitate what I so passionately admired. Happily, my endeavours succeeded so well, that in a little time I swore, got drunk, broke windows, kicked waiters, and insulted modest women, with as good a grace as if I had been colonel of a regiment.

In these fashionable amusements I wasted away above half my fortune in two or three years, with no other character than that of a very honest fellow; when a spirited rape on the daughter of my taylor took away two thousand pounds to hush a prosecution and make it up. The action increased my reputation, but hurt my circumstances much: I had not now as much more left in the world. I was disclaimed by my relations, and despised by my father's sober friends. One half of my companions had died, and the other half were in danger of a jail. The same misfortune stared me in the face; my debts were numerous, my creditors pressing; discharged they were obliged to be, and accordingly were; and, when every thing was finally settled, I found myself, instead of having increased my ten thousand, to have no more than seven hundred and fifty pounds left. What was to be done? I could not bear the thoughts of going back into the city, and understood no business if I did. A lieutenancy offering, I purchased it as the last resource, and am now starving upon the half pay. A striking example of ignorant pride and under-bred prodigality; at once the warning and contempt of our shewy little citizens.

My letter needs neither comment nor application; what I shall say may be contained in the butt-end of the old song—

Learn to be wise from other's harms,
And you shall do full well.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.
WILLIAM WEAKLY.

Nº XVIII. SATURDAY, JUNE 11.

UNFASHIONABLE soever as it may be to enter upon religious subjects in such an age as the present, there are some who, I flatter myself, will nevertheless pay a little attention to a topic of such importance without a blush, and think it no disgrace either to their gentility or their understanding, to employ a few moments in the consideration of some points, for which at the awful period of their dissolution, eternities upon eternities will hardly seem too much.

When we consider the differences which daily subsist in the various modes or systems of the Christian religion, and think upon the inflexible partiality which every man entertains in favour of his own, we ought to be absolutely certain that the particular form which each of us glories to possess, is perfectly conformable to our notions of the Deity, and consistent in the minutest degree with those divine lessons which were inculcated by the Saviour of the world, in his mysterious mission to man. If we are not positive in this, let our belief be distinguished by what name soever we think proper, let us be Protestants or Papists, Quakers or Presbyterians, I can take upon me to aver, that we have no right to the name of Christians; and may, with equal propriety, take a lesson from the ALCORAN as the GOSPEL.

It is not the ceremony used at baptism, the sprinkling of water, nor the promises of our parents in the presence of God, which constitute the CHRISTIAN; no, it is an actual conformity to the precepts of our BLESSED LORD, and an undeviating obedience to the tenets which are laid down in the history of his life and miracles. Nothing can be more absurd, nor in reality more criminal, than for a man to aspire at the glorious title of a Christian, who is regardless of the duties which that appellation renders indispensably necessary, or a stranger to the obligations which are particularly enjoined by the name; it is at once a fatal deception of his own most important expectations, an insult to his Saviour, and a defiance of his God.

With what propriety, shall I beg leave to ask, can the various sects of religion

in this kingdom call themselves Christians, when, in the unremitting hatred which they constantly entertain towards one another, they utterly destroy that universal principle of *Charity* which ought to be the foundation, nay, the very essence of their belief? With what propriety can he, who is blessed with unbounded affluence, style himself a Christian, if his ear is turned away from the cry of affliction, or his heart unaffected with the tear of distress? Christianity obliges him to a constant relief of the wretched; and, without a behaviour entirely consonant to the duties of this belief, what possible pretension can he have to a name that exalts him to a fellowship with angels, and lifts him above the stars? Will a constant attendance on the public place of his worship, exculpate the oppressor of the widow and the fatherless? or give the name of Christian to the villain who infamously lifts a dagger to the breast of his benefactor, or basely strives to murder the reputation of his friend? Can the betrayer of unsuspecting innocence think on the pangs of some violated virgin, left without assistance, without comfort, without bread; exposed to all the upbraidings of a relentless world, to aggravate the severity of her own reflections, and possibly plunged in the additional misery of having a helpless little innocent, and an unalterable affection for the monster by whom she is so cruelly undone? I say, can the perpetrator of an act like this, sit down calmly, satisfied with the rectitude of his behaviour, and think himself, as a Christian, sincerely acquitted to his God? Alas! if any man, thus culpable, can be so presumptuously daring as to think himself a Christian, it is doubtful whether he is most a reprobate or an idiot, or whether he is most regardless or ignorant of his crimes.

In every profession of the Christian faith there is a number of good-natured people, who are always uneasy about the fate of the Mahometans, and terribly afflicted lest the ignorant savages of America should not, at the last day, be received into the favour of the Supreme Being. These people entertain strange notions

notions of the *Deity*, if they can suppose that a Power *all-wise, all-merciful, and all-just*, will require, at the hands of such ignorant nations, a knowledge which he has not thought proper to bestow: a supposition of such a nature is highly derogatory to the Divine *Essence*; it is a tacit implication that the *great Father* of the universe exercises a severity which would be cruel in his creatures but to think of; and a palpable insinuation, that the *Being of beings* is capable of a tyranny which would utterly degrade the meanest, in the human race, among the wonders of his hand. No; from such only as have received much, much is expected; and perhaps, at the last day, myriads of our *nominal Christians*, who look upon the *American Savage* with pity or contempt, would give a hecatomb of worlds, had they power to change situations, to have so little to answer for as him. Conformable to what he knows, he invariably regulates the tenor of his conduct, maintains an unalterable reverence for some great object which he looks upon as his *God*, and pays an implicit obedience to his laws; whatever his system of belief may be, he endeavours to do it all the honour in his power, and shudders at nothing so much as the thought of bringing it into disgrace. Who amongst us can honestly say the same?

Enlightened with the lamp of science, and the sun of true religion, *our actions* are a perpetual stigma on our belief: we acknowledge the wonderful mercies of a *suffering Redeemer*, yet are continually uttering blasphemies against his name; we own the infinite merits of his *Gospel*, and yet act in manifest contradiction to every precept it contains. The *Deity*, we are sensible, can think us into ashes for the enormity of our crimes, and yet we continue to behave in open disobedience to his will: in short, both hoping and fearing the existence of another world, we sacrifice every valuable opportunity in this; and, constantly boasting the advantages accruing from our religion, we are always acting as if we had no religion at all. Let us, therefore, instead of condemning the errors of our neighbours, begin with correcting whatever is amiss in ourselves; and, instead of finding fault with the religion of other people, be satisfied that *real Christianity* is the basis of our own. The whole mystery, both of religion and government, will be found in these admirable lines of Mr. Pope—

For forms of government let fools contest;
Whate'er is best administered, is best.
For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight;
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.

Nº XIX. SATURDAY, JUNE 18.

ORASMIN AND ALMIRA:

AN ORIENTAL TALE.

SON of man, learn resignation to the appointments of Providence, nor dare to drop a murmur at the dispensations of the Most Just. Think not of disputing with the wisdom of Infinity; nor dream of wresting the vindictive thunderbolt from the dread right-hand of God.

In the city of Bagdad, so celebrated by the sages of antiquity, lived Orasmin, the son of Ibrahim, whose name was an Aromatic that perfumed the remotest corners of the East. His person was as noble as the rising oak in the forest, and his mind as unfulled as a meridian beam fromt he sun; his boun-ty wiped away the tear from the eye of

the fatherless, nor did the mourning of the widow ever pass unregarded at his gate. To sum up his character at once, complacency and benevolence were always seated on his brow; and humanity was a virtue so natural to his heart, that it formed the very core, and twisted round the strings. Thus amiable, it was no wonder, that by all who saw him he should be instantly admired; and thus deserving, no way strange, that by all who knew him he should be cordially respected and beloved.

Among a variety of virgins who lan-
guished for Orasmin, Almira, a damsel of Balsora, newly arrived at Bagdad, was the only person blessed with a reciprocal esteem. The blush of the morn-
ing was less rosy than her cheek, and the diamond of Golconda not so brilliant as her eye; her bosom was as white as

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the swan upon the waters, and gentle as the midsummer murmur of the stream. How oft, O ye groves of Balsora, have ye echoed with the fame of her beauty! How oft, O ye vallies of Bagdad, have ye resounded with her praise! You know that her voice would chain the tiger of the desert, and unnerve the wild stag as he darted from the hill; you know that the spices of Ormus could not equal her in breath, nor the daughters of Paradise excel her in dignity and grace.

Orasmin and Almira were not more distinguished for their merit, than remarkable for their loves; and as neither had any parent living to oppose their wishes, a day was appointed for the celebration of their nuptials, to the universal satisfaction of their friends. Orasmin, all impatient for possessing the only object that had ever engrossed his heart, longed for the happy hour with the utmost anxiety, and feasted his imagination continually with the raptures he was to experience in the arms of Almira. She, not less impatient, though more confined in her expressions of the approaching felicity, painted equally warm to her fancy the uninterrupted enjoyment of all she held dear, and counted over the weeks, the months, and the years, she had a probable expectation of passing in the tenderest intercourse with her adored Orasmin. But, alas! while our lovers were thus enhancing the present, by reflecting on the future, an order arrived for Almira to attend the Caliph, who had for some time been entertained with various reports of her unparalleled beauty, and wanted to see if the encomiums lavished so frequently upon her were just. Neither her religion nor her allegiance could allow her to form any excuse for not attending the *Commander of the Faithful*, much less admit of a resolution to disobey; he was worshipped with an implicit reverence, as a successor of the holy Mahomet, by all his people, and his word was ever looked upon as the irrevocable voice of Fate. Almira, therefore, was immediately carried, with a bleeding heart, to the palace; and the moment she was beheld by the Caliph, declared the most favourite of his queens.

It is not in language to tell the distraction of the two lovers, at being thus unexpectedly torn for ever from each other's arms. The moment Orasmin

heard that his Almira had captivated the Caliph, he looked upon the busines of life to be entirely over; and, unable to support the inexpressible agonies of his own mind, considered the angel of death as the only minister of repose: for two whole days and nights he wandered through the various rooms of his house in an absolute state of phrenzy, calling out at every interval, in the most passionate tone, on the name of his ravished Almira. On the third day, growing somewhat calmer, he began to reflect on all the circumstances of his past life, in order to find out in what particular he had given Mahomet such unpardonable offence, as to meet with so severe a chastisement at his hands. After revolving a long time, and finding nothing but some youthful indiscretions to answer for, which were infinitely overbalanced by a number of meritorious actions, he insensibly dropped upon one knee, and began to expostulate, in the following manner, with his God—

‘ Thou great Creator of the universe,
‘ who fittest enthroned above the seven
‘ heavens, where even the conception of
‘ no prophet but the holy Mahomet
‘ can dare to soar; look down in mercy
‘ on a wretch, who numbers himself
‘ with the most unhappy of human beings,
‘ though he has constantly maintained the deepest reverence for thy
‘ laws; tell him, O thou infinitely High!
‘ inform him, O thou inexpressibly
‘ Just! why he, who has ever made it
‘ his unalterable study to deserve thy
‘ awful sanction on his deeds, is deemed
‘ to suffer what the most impious pro-
‘ phane of thy divine will would look
‘ upon as a severity, and confidently
‘ exclaim, was too great a punishment
‘ for the most enormous of his crimes! ’

Orasmin had scarcely ended, when a clap of thunder shook the house, and an unusual brightness lightened the room, where he still continued on his knee, astonished at this apparent message from the Deity. When he recovered himself a little, a voice, as aweful as the trumpet of heaven, desired him carefully to attend, and thus went on—‘ Cease, O
‘ mistaken man, to doubt the mercy
‘ and justice of the Supreme Being,
‘ who, though he acts by unknown
‘ springs and seeming severities, is ever
‘ watchful for the happiness of the vir-
‘ tuous, and perfectly confident in all
his

his laws. Consider, Orasmin, that this world is a transitory bubble, which must shortly burst upon the ocean of time; that it is at best but a short voyage, in which every passenger must meet with some disagreeable gales, in order to prove his dependence on the hand of Infinite Goodness, and shew that he is worthy of entering into an everlasting port. Without some adverse storms to ruffle the sea of life, the tide of prosperity would frequently swell the creature into a forgetfulness of the Creator, and reduce him to a more dangerous situation than the bitterest blast he can experience will ever bring him to—a total indifference of his God. Out of mercy, therefore, a variety of shoals and quicksands are thrown in his way, which keeping the sense of his dependence on the Divine Being constantly alive in this world, puts him in a capacity of steering his bark in the proper channel, and enables him to arrive at endless happiness in the next. But, abstracted from this general order in the state of things, know, Orasmin, that because

• thou wert a peculiar favourite of Heaven, it was decreed to snatch Almira from thy arms: she was, O man, thy sister. Ibrahim, thy father, journeying to Balsora, was admitted to the Cady's wife, and the product of their guilty commerce was Almira. Here again observe the kindness of Heaven in it's very severities, which, in order to deter the parent from the commission of enormities, denounces a judgment against what he values more highly than worlds, his race. Orasmin, be comforted; I have visited Almira, and informed her of these things; she is at ease, remain thou so too, and remember never again to doubt the goodness of Providence, which in it's own time will reward those who place their confidence in it's hands.' Orasmin after this lived many years in happiness, and left many children, who succeeded to his virtues and fortune: the eldest of whom was grand vizier to the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, and ordered these matters to be recorded in the histories of Bagdad.

Nº XX. SATURDAY, JUNE 25.

TO THE BABLER.

ST^R,
FORTITUDE and constancy of mind are qualities to which every nation, in proportion as it is civilized, lays a formidable claim; and to which, however, very few, were we to examine the matter thoroughly, can have any tolerable pretension, besides the compliment which on those occasions each is so extremely liberal in paying to itself. In fact, it might not be difficult to prove, from every day's experience, that the propagation of the sciences, while they improve, generally enervate the mind; and that true fortitude and constancy of soul, are more the result of a self-approving conscience than the effect of an excellent understanding.

A number of philosophers, who have astonished the world with the greatness of their genius, and the extent of their reading, might talk very prettily on this subject; but when they came once to put any of their own lessons into practice, this boasted resolution of which they imagined themselves possessed, dis-

appeared in an instant ; and from deserving the universal admiration of mankind, they became entitled to nothing but an absolute contempt. Cicero, in his orations, might express the greatest disregard of death he pleased, and tell us that a man should not hesitate a moment in sacrificing his life for the good of his country ; but the orator found the practice infinitely harder than the precept, and leagued himself with the enemies of the public, after all, in hope of saving the life which he affected so highly to despise.

Who could talk better upon the virtues, or give more excellent lessons of morality, than our own countryman my Lord St. Albans; yet who, when he fell from the pinnacle of honour and preferment, ever shewed a greater servility of mind, or took more infamous methods to repair his shattered fortune? The most scandalous adulation that could be paid at court, he was constantly paying; and notwithstanding, after his disgrace, he was writing a book which confers an honour on human nature, yet his in-

tervals were taken up in defending every pernicious measure of the crown, and employed in destroying the liberty of his country. Need the cause of his disgrace be mentioned here, to prove that, notwithstanding his wonderful abilities, he wanted fortitude to resist the force of a trifling sum of money, and honesty to discharge the important duties of his trust? Or what shall we say of a man, who, while he was establishing the highest testimony of human genius, for two or three hundred pounds erected an everlasting monument of human baseness too? In reality, science and understanding can do nothing more than teach our constancy and fortitude a nobler way of appearing; the qualities themselves must proceed from a firmer foundation than both. The wisdom of Socrates gave a manner to his fortitude, which left an irresistible charm in his death; but the fortitude itself proceeded not from the excellence of his understanding, but the goodness of his heart.

But to prove, beyond a possibility of dispute, that a knowledge of the sciences has nothing to do in the qualities under consideration, let us only refer to the behaviour of a poor Indian, as related by Lafitaw, taken in battle by his enemies, and condemned as a sacrifice to the manes of such as either he himself or his countrymen destroyed in the field.

— The moment he is condemned, he opens his death-song, and is fastened to a stake, the chiefs of the nation which has taken him sitting round a fire, and smoaking all the time. Such as chuse to be concerned in the execution, begin with torturing at the extremities of his body, till by degrees they approach the trunk; one pulls off all his nails from the roots; another takes a finger and tears off the flesh with his teeth; a third takes the finger, thus mangled, and thrusts it into the bowl of a pipe made red-hot, and smokes it like tobacco; others cut and slash the fleshy parts of his body, and sear the wounds immediately up with burning irons; some strip the skin off his head, and pour boiling lead upon it; others tear the flesh entirely from his arms, and twist the bare tendrils and sinews round red-hot irons, twirling and snapping at the same

time; some pound his fingers and toes to pieces between two stones; others all the while distending and stretching every limb and joint, to encrease the inconceivable horror of his pains. During this, the miserable sufferer, sometimes rendered insensible by the torture, falls into so profound a sleep, that they are obliged to apply the fire to recover him, and untie him, to give a breathing to the fury of their own revenge. Again he is tied, and his teeth drawn one by one, his eyes beat out, and no one trace of humanity left in his visage. In this situation, all over one continued munity, one inexpressible wound, they beat him from one to another with clubs; the wretch now up, now down, falling in their fires at every step; till at last, wearied out with cruelty, some of their chiefs put an end with a dagger to his sufferings, and terminates the execution, which often lasts five or six hours, by ordering on the kettle, and making a feast as horrid and barbarous as their revenge.

But what renders this more surprising, is a contest which subsists all the time between the sufferer and them, whether he has most fortitude in bearing, or they ingenuity in aggravating, his pangs. At every interval they give him, he smokes unconcerned with the rest, without one murmur or shadow of a groan; recounts what exploits he has done, and tells them how many of their countrymen he has killed, in order to encrease their fury; nay, he reproaches them with an ignorance of torturing, and points out such parts of his body himself as are more exquisitely sensible of pain. The women have this part of courage with the men; and, incredible soever as such an astonishing constancy of mind may appear, it would be as odd to see one of these people suffer in another manner, as it would be to find an European who could suffer with any thing like their fortitude. An inflexible uniformity to the principles in which they are bred is the occasion of this fortitude; and, without one spark of learning, occasions a behaviour which distances the most celebrated stories of antiquity, and baffles the profoundest lessons of all the philosophers.

T. B.

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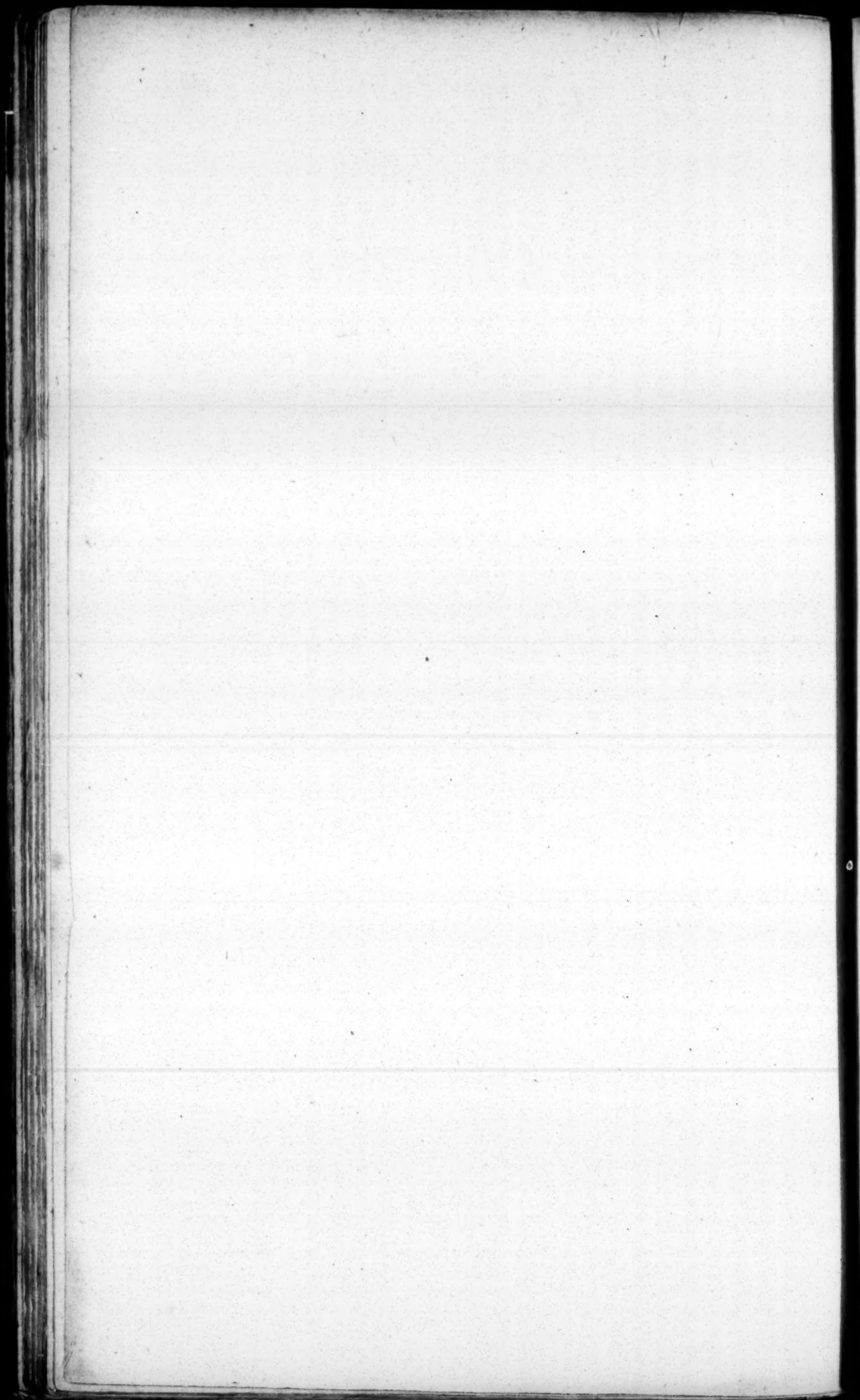


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Nº XXI. SATURDAY, JULY 2.

FEW of the nobler qualifications are so generally pretended to as Friendship, or a capacity of entertaining so cordial a regard for the interest of another person, as to make it equally an object of importance with our own. I was talking last night with my old acquaintance, Will Threadbare, on this very subject, at the Queen's Arms in St. Paul's Church-yard; when Will related over the history of his friendships to me for the ninety-ninth time, and concluded with his usual invective against all the world, and the little confidence which is to be placed in the honour or honesty of any man. To save him the trouble of repeating his narrative again, I shall take the liberty of making it the subject of the present paper; more especially as I know the publication can be no way disagreeable to him, and may probably prove of some entertainment to my readers.

FROM my very infancy up, Mr. Babler, says Will, I found that all those attachments which we are weak enough to distinguish by the name of Friendship, were nothing more than the effects of our folly, or the consequence of our design. A parity of sentiments always created an intimacy between a couple of rascals, who, willing to believe that they were capable of feeling the exalted glow of a virtuous friendship, imagined they really did feel it; and having once flattered themselves with this opinion, rested wonderfully pleased with the superstructure, without ever examining the foundation upon which it was built.

When I was at Eton, no two in the world could be more intimate; that is, in the language of the world, entertain a greater friendship for each other, than a fellow who now possesses one of the most valuable employments in the kingdom, and your humble servant. How often have we swore that nothing should ever separate us when we came into the great theatre of life, as actors for ourselves! This regard we carried to such an excess, that we have frequently boxed one another's battles, and always looked upon the least affront offered to either, as an unpardonable injury to both. But, alas! Mr. Babler, one Whitsun-

Monday the provost, who was an old acquaintance of my father's, took me out in a chaise with him to a neighbouring gentleman's house; and as my friend was not treated with the same distinction, he grew envious of his Pylades, behaved intolerably cold at our next meeting, which I could not but observe; and being perhaps a little too tart in my reproaches, he took an occasion to quarrel with me; the consequence of which was, that he and I never spoke a word together after. This lad's esteem for me commenced first of all from my dexterity in robbing orchards; an amusement of which he was particulary fond, and therefore could not help esteeming a temper that bore so strong a resemblance to his own: but as the basis of our regard was so very trivial in itself, our friendship must be supposed to have but a slender support; and therefore a misunderstanding was but a matter of course.

At Oxford I commenced an everlasting friendship, to be sure, with Ned Guzzle, because I was unalterably attached to the bottle myself, and he was reckoned the hardest drinker in the university. Our everlasting friendship, however, continued but six weeks; for a couple of unlucky rogues pitted us against one another to drink for a rump of beef and a dozen of Madeira, in which it being my fortune to swallow half a pint more than my antagonist, he wrote me a letter, when he got up next evening, desiring that all manner of correspondence might be dropped between us for the future.

When I came up to town, and got possession of my little fortune, Dick Wildman and I were inseparable; we lodged in the same house, spent every evening at the same tavern together, and retired every morning with a strumpet to the same bagnio under the piazza. We were always coupled in our amours; and never attacked a milliner's apprentice, or a tradesman's wife, unless there were two to find us both employment in the same family. This was not all; I once fought a duel for him behind Montague House, and ran the double chance both of the gallows and cold iron. Yet, see the fatality attending all sublunary

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things!—Dick surprized me one morning in bed with one of the maids where we lodged, whom he had been soliciting for some time, though unknown to me; and was so offended at the unpardonable preference which the hussey gave me, that he instantly ordered his man to pack up his things, and decamped next day without saying a single syllable.

I could recount a variety of instances where my friendships were equally unsuccessful, though I never refused either my sword, or my purse, to any of those partners of my heart; but finding, by fatal experience, that no friendship is lasting which is not founded on virtue,

and believing in my soul, that there is not a spark of virtue in any man alive, I am absolutely determined never to have another friendship, but to starve as decently as I can upon my seventy pounds a-year, and to repeat that admirable sentiment of Swift, when any well-behaved scoundrel makes me the smallest declaration of his esteem—

Whene'er a prating Rascal cries,
He is your dearest Friend—he lies;
To lose a guinea at piquet,
Would make him rave, blaspheme, and sweat,
Bring from his heart sincerer groans,
Than if he heard you broke your bones.

Nº XXII. SATURDAY, JULY 9.

I Do not know any one circumstance so productive of disorder and confusion, as the general propensity among all ranks of people, when they meet in company, to be joyous, as it is called; nor any thing where, in the pursuit of pleasure, and the hope of spending an agreeable evening, they are so utterly mistaken in the means. I am led into this reflection, as well from the experience of my own younger days, as the universal confession of all my juvenile acquaintance of the present times, with whom I very frequently chat half an hour upon the subject; and as a discussion of this point may perhaps prove as pleasing to my readers as a discourse upon any other topic, I shall make a little narrative, which I had yesterday from my nephew, Harry Rattle, the substance of the ensuing paper.

I have often told my subscribers, that, though considerably on the wrong side of fifty, an unassuming air of gaiety and freedom still renders me tolerable to the society of the young people, and that there is seldom a day in which I have not a visit, or an invitation, from several to whom I might almost be a grandfather. Among the many by whom I am thus favourably distinguished, my sister Rattle's youngest son Harry treats me with a cheerful familiarity, without ever transgressing the smallest bound of respect. There is a something in this young fellow, which, abstracted from his affinity to me, I cannot help admiring. An open inge-

nuity of carriage, mixed with a fund of excellent sense, are not the least of his accomplishments; he has read a great deal; and, what is infinitely more, he never took up an author without perfectly understanding him. As well as a compleat scholar, Harry is really a pretty gentleman, and possesses no less a good heart than a fine understanding. As my nephew's qualifications are very well known, it is impossible but every body must be fond of his company. This sometimes leads him into foibles; and, in spite of his good sense, an easiness of temper that cannot resist the solicitations of his friends, frequently runs him into errors, which, with all my partiality for him, I can by no means approve, notwithstanding the rogue would make any body overlook them by the self-accusing honesty and readiness of his own reflections. Whenever I get Harry for a subject of discourse, I scarce know how to end, I am so fond of dwelling upon what I cordially esteem. But, not to trespass upon the patience of my readers, who are no way interested in his qualities, it is high time I should proceed to the purpose I set out with, and assume the matter, instead of preaching on the man. Well, then, yesterday morning Harry called upon me about eleven, his face spiritless and pale, his lips livid and swollen, a visible fatigue spread all over his features, and his eyes sunk in his head. I began instantly to open at the young rogue, guessing justly enough at the cause of his appearance;

when

when he flopped into my great chair, and prevented all the severity I intended to treat him with, by being considerably more severe upon himself.

" My dear Sir," says he, " I am not worth your anger; advice is thrown away upon me; I sin against the conviction of my own reason, and am no less an obstinate puppy, than a ridiculous fool. Why, last night again, notwithstanding all my late resolutions, Dick Bumper only asked me a second time to sup with a few friends at his house, and though I was very sensible what the consequence might inevitably prove, do you know that I had not fortitude enough to refuse him? At four this morning we broke up, after the usual manner, heartily weary of each other, fatigued to death with our entertainment, and utterly dissatisfied with ourselves.

" I wish, Sir, you would say something on this subject, and point out the monstrous absurdity which generally prevails in a joyous evening. When a few friends meet together, instead of indulging a rational conversation, you hear of nothing but a toast and a song: the chairman calls in turn upon every one for his toast, and frequently puts us to a stand for the want of something spirited and new. In this dilemma, obscenity and prophanation is but too general a resource; and it is no uncommon thing to hear men, of reputed understanding, extol the name of some public prostitute, and ridicule the precepts of their God.

" The custom of every man's singing in turn, is still considerably more ridiculous, and commonly as profane. At any of these joyous meetings, even I, who have a voice more disagreeable than the grating of a gate upon hinges, and know no more of music than a Hottentot, can never get excused; but must make myself ridiculous in attempting what I am utterly incapable of, and disturb the people who drive me most im-

portunately on. How often have I been teased to sing by a number of my intimate acquaintance? and yet, the moment I began, there was no possibility of concealing their disgust; they whispered one another, gave a forced attention, or lolled insipidly in their chairs, stroking the plaits of their ruffles, or playing with the chain of their watch; then longing impatiently till I had finished, gave a faint bravo, and called out for a toast from the next member in rotation; whilst I sat frying the whole time, from a conscious incapacity to please, and a strange necessity of giving a general dissatisfaction.

" Perhaps, Sir, no custom in the world is so very dangerous or unpardonable as toasting; it levels all distinction in constitutions, and obliges a man, in an indifferent state of health, to drink as much as him that is blessed with the strength of a Hercules. It is the immediate parent of noise and intoxication; and, amongst people of the best sense, answers no other purpose but to leave them without any sense at all.

" How preposterous a notion is it, my dear Sir, to suppose our joyous societies stimulated by the principles of true benevolence or real esteem, when every man has a design upon the weakness or constitution of his friend, and pushes the glass about for no other purpose but to prejudice his health, and destroy his understanding! nay, when we make it our chiefest glory to have drank him out of all knowledge of order, all regard for himself, and all veneration for his God; when we reduce him to a state of absolute phrenzy and stupefaction, and either expose him to the numberless quarrels attending the first, or the multitude of accidents peculiar to the last, of these situations—But, Sir, I want to acquaint you with an affair of some consequence."

Here Harry hesitated; and here I postpone the account of this affair till my next paper.

Nº XXIII. SATURDAY, JULY 16.

I Shall now resume the subject of my foregoing paper, and shew one of the many thousand ill consequences which proceed from the modern method

of being *joyous*, and the illiberal indulgence of the glass, at the most friendly of our general entertainments.

The matter of consequence which my nephew

nephew Harry wanted to acquaint me with, was the following note, which he received from Mr. Bumper—at whose house he had spent the preceding evening—just as he was stepping out to chat half an hour with me at my chambers.

TO H. RATTLE, ESQ.

SIR,

LAST night you refused drinking Kitty Edwards, who was my toast, and on that occasion offered several new-fashioned arguments in support of your behaviour, which testified nothing more than a peculiarity of temper, but did no very great credit to the acknowledged goodness of your understanding. After you had refused my toast, no gentleman in company once asked you to drink his, though all took notice of your unaccountable singularity. The regard I must entertain for my own honour, and the respect which is due to my friends, oblige me to request an interview at the Bedford by one, to demand an explanation of this affair, which I was last night hindered from enquiring into, by my fears of disturbing the company and the consideration of my own house. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

RICHARD BUMPER.

I had no sooner read the letter, than Harry cried out—‘ You see, Sir, the consequence of being an advocate for common sense. Here I must have my throat cut for refusing to drink the health of an infamous strumpet; or, in vindication of my conduct, cut the throat of my friend. What would you advise me to do? The time draws on; and I would not have Mr. Bumper wait a moment for the universe! —‘ Why, Harry,’ says I, ‘ go instantly, and hear what the gentleman has to say; but be sure remember that your life is not to be set at stake for a glass of wine, or an abandoned woman, little regard foever as Mr. Bumper may entertain for his; and, let matters turn out as they will, come back as soon as possible, and tell me the consequence of your interview.’ Harry promised a punctual observance of my advice and request; and accordingly came back in a couple of hours after, and related the substance of his conversation with Mr.

Bumper; which, for the greater ease of my readers, I shall set down as it was spoken, inserting the name of the speaker at the same time in the margin.

Rattle. MR. Bumper, your most obedient. I am come, pursuant to a note you have honoured me with this morning, written in a very unexpected as well as extraordinary style, to know in what manner I have been unhappy enough to give you the least offence.

Bumper. The question is utterly unnecessary, Mr. Rattle; the manner of offending me is plainly enough declared in my letter, and nothing remains now to be discussed but the motive.

Rattle. This will not take us up much time, Sir; for, be assured, I had not the least motive for offending you at all.

Bumper. This is very odd, Mr. Rattle! Why, then, did you refuse my toast?

Rattle. Because I saw no reason why, if Mr. Bumper would disgrace his understanding, that I should offer a palpable indignity to mine. I have been too long the slave of company and custom; but, for the future, am determined never to testify so public a mark of respect, as a toast for any man or woman who are justly the universal objects of detestation or contempt. To drink the health of a rascal is an approbation of his conduct; and a toast to the name of an infamous woman destroys any merit that can dwell upon a glass, in compliment to a valuable one.

Bumper. These—with a sneer—cynical sentiments may do very well in speculation, Mr. Rattle; but give me leave to assert, with all possible deference to the superiority of your boasted understanding, that the practice will be somewhat difficult; and furthermore, let me add, that you will be frequently liable to explain this ridiculous deviation from the general rules of company, or reduced to a necessity of keeping no company at all.

Rattle.—briskly—And be assured, Mr. Bumper, I never shall regret the loss of that company which looks upon common sense as an enemy to it’s mirth or institution.

Bumper. But don’t you think, Sir, that the refusal of a toast may be justly considered an actual disrespect to the giver?

giver? and that, upon that occasion, he has a right, by the rules of custom, to call the refuser to an account?

Rattle. Sir, you may call any man to an account when you will. But consider whether reason justifies or condemns the proceedings.—Come, come, Mr. Bumper, it is not for you and I to make a serious affair of a trifle; I again repeat, that I had no notion of offending you; and I fancy you can recollect instances enough where my veracity has not admitted of a dispute. I am sorry to see you so warm upon this occasion; but let me ask your heart, if it thinks the refusal of drinking a strumpet's health a crime that deserves the murder of your friend?

Bumper. Sir, it is not the disrespect offered to her, but to myself.

Rattle. — interrupting — Then you own that she is not worth quarrelling for; and yet make yourself so much a part of her, as to run the most extravagant lengths in her defence.—My dear Bumper, you may see from this the

impropriety of all toasting; for you might as well run me through the body, for not falling in love with any woman you think proper to mention, as he offended at my refusing to drink her health. The question is not to be decided by the laws of custom, but by the rules of reason; and what a figure must a man make in any argument, where he denies truth and understanding a liberty to judge!—Upon the whole, Dick, if you are determined to cut my throat, you must; but do not commit an unnecessary murder to convince me of what I am already convinced, that you have spirit enough to resent a real injury; nor seek out imaginary provocations to shew how ready you would be in chastising an absolute affront.

Here the affair happily terminated much to the honour of both parties, who are now warmer friends than ever, and afford, by the propriety of their reconciliation, a sensible lesson to the giddily-spirited part of the public.

Nº XXIV. SATURDAY, JULY 23.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,
GREAT an opposition as there seems between vanity and meanness, yet, if we take but ever so cursory a view of the world, we shall find them to be pretty general companions, and scarcely meet a single instance in which there can be discovered any shadow of exception. Among my own sex particularly, Mr. Babler, vanity is the parent of so many meannesses, that I am actually surprized, when we endeavour to give ourselves most consequence, that we never perceive how we forfeit all the dignity we just before possessed; and in the ridiculous attempt of arrogating our own importance, leave ourselves, in short, without any real importance at all.

This is never more the case, Sir, than when we listen to the solicitations of your sex; and, for the sake of a despicable compliment to our teeth or our complexion, overlook the unpardonable affront which it generally conveys, and take no notice of the very poor opinion it insinuates, both for the purity of our hearts,

and the rectitude of our understandings. We suffer the most illiberal addresses to be paid us, if they are but softened with the words Angel and Goddess; and admit a designing villain as often as he pleases into our presence, though we know our ruin and disgrace are the only objects of his pursuit, if he but praises the colour of our hair, and tells us we are possessed of finer eyes than the rest of our acquaintance. In short, Sir, we are willing a man should think there is a probability of our launching into infamy and prostitution, for the sake of hearing our persons commended; and perfectly reconciled, while he treats us on a footing with the handsomest women he may know, to his thinking, that in time he shall number us with the very worst.

A woman, Sir, whenever she is told of her beauty with a grave face, should first of all consider the purpose for which she may be addressed in this manner, and reflect upon the motive which may actuate the person who professes himself so sensible of her perfections. Nothing is more dangerous than to suffer continued repetitions of this stile; it gradually

dually becomes more and more pleasing to the ear; and there is, besides, too natural a promptitude in the female mind to think favourably of those who seem to think passionately of us. A language of this nature, therefore, should be highly alarming to our ears; for many a woman, who thought herself impregnable, has, in a length of time, grown so enamoured of her own praise, that she could not possibly exist without the person who administered it, and has at last made a surrender at discretion; when, had she first of all capitulated on terms, she might have insisted on the very best.

Let us only reduce the general tendency of modern addresses into plain English, Mr. Babler, and ask the most indiscreet of the sex, if they can, in their conscience, discover them to be a jot better than this—“ Madam, I look up—
“ on you as a fool, and one whom I
“ have a strong inclination to make a
“ strumpet; for which reason I intend
“ to talk continually of your charms,
“ and, by sacrificing in that manner to
“ your vanity, I have no doubt but, in
“ a few days, I shall bring you to an
“ utter disregard of morality and virtue,
“ to an absolute contempt of all the
“ laudable sentiments which you have
“ been imbibing so many years, and a
“ total indifference for your own reputa-
“ tion, and the honour of your sex.
“ As I think your wickedness equal to
“ your folly, I beg, when I mention
“ the word *beauty*, that you will prefer
“ the gratification of the man who is
“ your greatest enemy, to the peace of
“ those who are your unalterable friends;
“ nor hesitate a moment to break the
“ heart of a parent that tenderly loves
“ you, to please an infamous scoundrel
“ who labours for your everlasting dis-
“ grace. In short, Madam, I expect,
“ in return for a paltry compliment to
“ your person, that you scruple not to

“ endure continual shame in this world,
“ nor shrink at hazarding your eternal
“ happiness in the next; but run at once
“ to plunge a dagger into the breast of
“ your father, and hurl an impious de-
“ fiance at the very throne of your
“ God.”

I had myself, Mr. Babler, lately two or three lovers, who kindly said very pretty things to my person; and, would you believe it, that one of them was a married man?—This gentleman came one day with all the easy impudence in life, and with as much composure as if he had been really performing a meritorious action, threw himself at my feet, and swore he could not live unless I pitied him. Had I a dagger, I believe I should have stuck it in the villain's heart: however, assuming all the anger I possibly could, in a face not naturally the most placid, I mentioned some thoughts of paying a visit to his wife, which effectually banished him from my presence without doing the smallest injury to his health, or disturbing in the least the usual serenity of his temper.

A lord next told me I was the most angelic piece of flesh and blood he had ever beheld; and solicited, in good earnest, that I would bless him with my favourable opinion; but I had no sooner talked of coronets on my coach, than the truly honourable earl sneaked instantly off, excusing himself on account of a treaty then in agitation with Lady Betty Squander.

What you men think of us, Mr. Babler, I know not; nor, indeed, can I conceive what we women in general think of ourselves: but of this I am absolutely certain, that while we continue so intolerably vain, we must be liable to an infinity of meannesses; and that the surest way for any woman to be undone, is to think there is nobody comparable to herself.

Nº XXV. SATURDAY, JULY 30.

OF all the requisites essentially necessary to form a matrimonial felicity, a parity of ages may possibly be the very first; and if we were to take a nice survey of the various disproportioned matches which unhappily might be found within the Weekly Bills, the endless anxieties subsisting between each,

would be sufficient to frighten any prudent parent from bestowing his daughter's hand where there was not some equality of years; and at least a probability that her reason would in time reconcile her to a husband who, perhaps, might not at first be the object of her choice.

I am

I am very well aware, that many a careful father, and antiquated lover, will be apt to exclaim against this assertion: the first, from an economical consideration of the main chance; and the latter, from a natural insensibility which every man entertains for his own imperfections and infirmities. But could the one be brought to a belief that wealth, at the best of times, is a very precarious foundation for happiness; and the other be only prevailed upon to throw self aside for a moment or two, extraordinary as the position may seem on a partial consideration; both would nevertheless allow it to be of no little force.

Casual aversions may be lessened, in time, by an invariable tenderness, and an unexceptionable conduct in a husband. Personal defects, by being habitual to the eye, gradually lessen on the imagination, and, by an uninterrupted familiarity, very frequently cease to be disagreeable, much more continue to give perpetual disgust: but a disparity of years is an obstacle never to be surmounted; every day gives it an additional force; and, contrary to the general nature of all other evils—for in this case we must inevitably call it an evil—instead of being mitigated by the lenient hand of time, it becomes every moment more and more incapable of alleviation or cure.

But, besides the long train of disagreeable reflections which the bare circumstance of age is of itself capable of exciting in the bosom of any young woman, the innumerable list of diseases, which are it's inseparable attendants, occasion still stronger aversion; and, in reality, a young lady has but too much ground for anxiety and distress when she considers herself as a sacrifice to some venerable dotard; and, instead of the reasonable pleasures she might justly promise herself upon entering the world as a wife, sees nothing before her but the gloomy prospect of becoming a nurse to an emaciated wretch, worn away with the consequences of juvenile intemperance, and absolutely dying with gouts, palsies, rheumatisms, coughs, and catarrhs.

Contradictions so very opposite as extreme youth and age, there is hardly a possibility of reconciling. A fine sprightly girl, of nineteen or twenty, must naturally wish for amusements adapted to her time of life, and languish for such

enjoyments as are naturally repugnant to the sentiments, as well as the infirmities, of crazy fourscore. The situation of such a couple is easily imagined; the lady must be continually unhappy at being thus debarred, after the sacrifice she has made, from every entertainment suitable to her temper and her years; and the gentleman as constantly miserable at possessing an impotent authority, productive of nothing but eternal suspicions of her conduct, and the sharpest reflections on his own.

It is in vain to expect that the rectitude of a woman's education, thus circumstanced, or the excellence of her understanding, will be a means of procuring even a tolerable tranquillity or content; the more understanding she possesses, the more she must despise the self-interested dotard, who was utterly regardless of her inclinations; who, in all probability, used his utmost influence with a misguided and inexorable parent, to tear her from some deserving young fellow on whom her soul was unalterably fixed; and, perhaps, had her dragged to the bridal bed, like another Niobe, stiffening into horror, or dissolving in her tears.

In a situation of this nature, how a man can be weak enough to look for tenderness or affection from any young lady, is to me a miracle: nor am I less surprized how he can think of exciting her gratitude, by indulging her in trivial points, when he has so infamously injured her in the most capital of all; her everlasting hatred and abhorrence are the only returns he can reasonably look for; and if there is a possibility for her to view him with less than an insuperable contempt, I am satisfied he must look upon her as a creature utterly divested of sensibility and soul, and view her with an absolute contempt himself.

An infinity of reasons might be urged against the disparity of age in matrimonial connections; but as I have lately received a story on this subject which will set this affair in a stronger light than a volume of declamatory arguments, I shall conclude the subject for the present with this observation, that he who marries a woman whom he knows has an attachment for another man, must look for wretchedness; and he that marries a woman contrary to her inclination, in reality deserves it.

N° XXVI. SATURDAY, AUGUST 6.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I AM one of those unhappy old block-heads whose passions out-live the power of indulgence, and are perpetually dreaming of a marriage-bed, instead of thinking seriously about the purchase of a winding-sheet. I am turned of sixty-five, worn away to a skeleton by a variety of diseases, the consequence of my youthful indiscretion; and am almost six months married to an amiable unhappy woman just bordering on twenty-two.

Being last Easter, Sir, at my son's in the country, I accidentally saw a young lady who was intimately acquainted with my grand-daughter Sally; and whom, on enquiry, I found to be the daughter of a curate lately settled in those parts, who had nothing to maintain a wife and four children but a slender forty pounds a year. Maria, the young lady's name in question, was the eldest, and had no other fortune than a most engaging person, an irresistible face, a good heart, and a fine understanding. These, however, had procured her the addresses of one Mr. Markham, a very worthy young fellow in the neighbourhood, who had newly set up in the grocery trade, with a capital of 3000l. and who, by her father's permission, and the consent of his own friends, was to be married to her on the Sunday fortnight following.

There was a something so engaging about Maria, Mr. Babler, as strangely affected me, and made me at once both very uneasy and very much ashamed. All thoughts of an intercourse with the sex, at my time of life, I was sensible should have totally subsided; yet, notwithstanding a conviction of that nature, I was determined, if there was a possibility of my succeeding, to have her. In vain my son pointed out the ridicule I should incur by so disproportioned a match; in vain did my daughter, nay, my grand-daughter too, endeavour to laugh me out of so preposterous a design; and in vain did my own reflection dwell upon the striking disparity of years, and the greatness of my infirmities. My authority silenced the remonstrances of my children, and my vanity turned a deaf ear to the self-convicted poignancy of my own. The circumstance of years, I thought,

my generosity would sufficiently counterbalance; and as for my disorders, I fancied my cough was considerably abated; and that, under a proper regimen, my gout might be rendered less troublesome, and the rheum of my eyes totally removed. I sent for an empiric to make a handsome set of teeth; exchanged my venerable tye for a smart fashionable bob, affected to read without spectacles, and threw by my crutch-headed stick.

Not to trouble you, Sir, Mr. Grasply, Maria's father, the moment I proposed a jointure, was in a transport; a promise of providing for his other children threw him into an extasy, and the reversion of a good living on my own estate, rendered him incapable of speaking a single word. Maria, after a thousand entreaties, and as many floods of tears, not to be sacrificed, as she called it, and a vain attempt of escaping to her dear Mr. Markham, was dragged to church in three days after, and came home Mrs. Totterly.

Having thus fortunately secured her for my wife, I thought my felicity almost compleated, and that the moment her tears were a little dried up, I should be the happiest of men. But, alas! Mr. Babler, I found a great difference betwixt the possession of an unwilling hand, and the enjoyment of a warm reciprocally beating heart: it required but small penetration to discover that I was the object of her unalterable aversion, and that the violence I had done to her real inclinations would plant perpetual thorns on her pillow, and fix everlasting anxiety on mine.

I will not trouble you, Mr. Babler, with a repetition of particular circumstances; suffice it, that notwithstanding I have used every method I could possibly devise to excite her gratitude, or engage her esteem, in the calmest of her moments, she looks upon me with a rooted hatred, or a contemptuous disgust. I in vain tempt her with equipage and dress: if the carriage is ordered to the door, she has the head-ache; and if I order home a fresh piece of silk, it is thrown neglected on the floor. Instead of mixing with society, she shuts herself up the principal part of the day in her closet; and if I chance by accident

ent to break in, I surprize her in tears. If my infirmities oblige me to the use of a separate bed, I am uneasy at being from her; and yet I am miserable by the horror she expresses in her looks, if they do not: if she chances to doze, the heaviness of her sighs distract me to the last degree; and if she mentions the word Markham in her dreams, as she frequently does, it is a scorpion of the most deadly nature, and stings me to the heart.

Upon the whole, Mr. Babler, asleep, or awake, at bed, or at board, I am the most miserable of men; and what, like a ridiculous dotard, I fancied would prove the greatest blessing of my life, by a just dispensation of Providence, turns out my unalterable curse. O Sir! to a man not altogether destitute of sensibility, what situation can be so truly wretched as mine? Without a friend to whom I can vent my griefs, without a bosom which I dare beg to pity my dis-

tres, to be despised by the woman I doat upon to madness, and to be a real object of contempt to myself, is too much! To be loaded with years, and so borne down with infirmities as to stand one continued mummy of emaciation, one complicated hoard of disease, is a dreadful reflection for a new married man!—a man totally incapable of inspiring a passion of the least tender nature, and as totally incapable of gratifying it, if he could!

From my story let other old dotards beware of following my example; for be assured, Mr. Babler, wherever there is a striking disparity of years, and the odds against the man, a very little time will convince him of his error; and make him wish, with me, that he had sent for an undertaker, and been buried fifty fathom quick before he made so preposterous a choice of a wife. I am, Sir, &c.

CHARLES TOTTERLY,

N^o XXVII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 13.

I SUPPED last night at my Sister Rattle's, where the discourse turning upon the education of children, my favourite Harry related a little story with which I was prodigiously affected; and as it conveys a very pretty moral, I shall make no apology for presenting it to my readers.

“A worthy old gentleman, who had by an inflexible industry acquired a large fortune, with great reputation, at length declining business, devoted his sole attention to the settlement of an only son, of whom he was uncommonly fond. In a little time he married him to a woman of family; and judging of the son's affection by his own, made over every shilling he was worth to the young gentleman, desiring nothing more than to be a witness of his happiness in the same house, and depending upon his gratitude for any cursory trifle he might want for the private use of his purse. The son had not been married however above six weeks, before he was under the sole dominion of his wife, and prevailed upon to treat the old gentleman with the most mortifying neglect. If he wanted the carriage for an airing, why, truly—‘ My Lady has engaged it.’ If he desired to mix in any little party of pleasure, They were quite full. He was suffered to sit whole evenings without being once spoken to; at table

he was obliged to call three or four times for a glass of wine, or a bit of bread; and if he ever entered into a narrative of any transaction which occurred in his youth, his obliging daughter-in-law immediately broke in upon him, and politely introduced a conversation upon something else. This unpardonable contempt was at last carried to such a degree, that his cough was complained of as troublesome; and under a pretence that his tobacco-box was insupportable, he was requested to eat in his own room.

“Four or five years passed on in this manner, which were rendered a little tolerable by the birth of a grandson, a most engaging boy, who, from the moment he was capable of distinguishing, seemed to be very fond of the old gentleman; and, by an almost instinctive attachment, appeared as if providentially designed to atone for the unnatural ingratitude of its father. He was now turned of four; when one day some persons of fashion dining at the house, the old gentleman, who knew nothing of the company, came down into the back-parlour to enquire for his little favourite, who had been two whole hours out of his apartment: he had no soon opened the door, than his dutiful son, before a room full of people, asked him how he dare break in upon him without leave, and desired him to get in-

stantly up about his business. The old gentleman withdrew, according to order, returned to his own room, and gave a very hearty freedom to his tears.

" Little Tommy, who could not bear to hear his grand-papa chided at such a rate, followed him instantly; and observing how heartily he sobbed, came roaring down to the parlour, and before the whole company bawled out—‘ Papa has made poor grand-papa break his heart; he will cry his eyes out above stairs.’ The son, who was really ashamed of his conduct, especially as he saw no sign of approbation in the faces of his friends, endeavoured to put an easy appearance on the affair, and brazen it out; turning round, therefore, to the child, he desired him to carry a blanket to grand-papa, and bid him go to bed. ‘ Aye, but I will not give him all the blanket,’ returned the child. ‘ Why so, my dear?’ says the father. ‘ Because,’ answered he, ‘ I shall want half for you, when I grow up to be a man, and turn you out of doors.’ The child’s reproof stung the father to the soul, and held up at once both the cruelty and ingratitude of his conduct in their proper dyes: nay, the wife seemed affected, and wanted words. A good-natured tear dropped from more than one of the company, who seized this opportunity of condemning, in a very candid manner, their behaviour to so affectionate a father, and so bountiful a friend; and, in short, made them so heartily ashamed of themselves, that the old gentleman was immediately sent for by both, who, in the presence of all, most humbly entreated his forgiveness for every thing past, and promised the business of their lives would be to oblige him for the future. The poor old gentleman’s joy threatened now to be much more fatal than his affliction a little before: he looked upon his son and daughter for some time with a mute astonishment, mixed with a tenderness impossible to be described; and then, fixing his eyes upon the company with a wildness of inconceivable rapture, snatched up his little Tommy to his bosom, who joined him in a hearty flood of tears.”

There is nothing, in reality, where people are so very wrong, as the education of children, though there is nothing in which they ought to be more absolutely certain of being right. If we seriously reflect upon the customary method in which children are brought up,

we must almost imagine, that the generality of parents inculcate principles of religion and virtue into their offspring, for the mere satisfaction of bringing both religion and virtue into contempt; and paint the precepts of morality in the most engaging colours, to shew, by their practice, how much these precepts are to be despised.

My friend, Ned Headstrong, is a parent of this cast; he is continually preaching up a rectitude of conduct to a very sensible young fellow his son; and yet as continually destroying, by his example, what he labours to effect by his advice. Ned expatiates largely about patience under the dispensations of Providence, and yet will fly into a passion of the most ungovernable nature, if a leg of mutton is boiled a minute too much. I have heard him launch forth in the praise of fortitude, while he has not been able to overcome the chagrin occasioned by spilling a drop of port upon the table-cloth; and very frequently listened to a lecture against a profligate mention of the Divine name, interspersed with a variety of horrid execrations.

The same preposterous inconsistency in the education of an only daughter is a distinguishing peculiarity of Lady Dye Dawdie. Her ladyship is no great gadabout, for she lies in bed all the day, and plays at cards all night; she cannot be accused of misbehaviour in church, for I do not suppose she has been once at a place of public worship these twenty years. A tradesman can never call twice at her house for a bill; for there is not one, who has the least acquaintance with her character, that would trust her with a yard of ribband, or a row of pins. Her reputation has never been suspected, for there is not a man in England who would think it worth his while to accept of the highest favour she could possibly grant; and as for her veracity, that can by no means admit of a debate, for it is a question with me if she spoke a syllable of truth since her arrival at maturity. Yet, notwithstanding all these negative perfections, she is continually prescribing a contrary practice to her daughter, and perpetually condemning the young lady for the least imitation of what she is unceasingly practising herself.

I shall conclude this paper with a bit of advice addressed to every order of my readers. If a parent in reality would have his son a good man, let him teach by his practice, as much as by his precept;

except; and never, through a doating partiality, overlook those actions in a child which he would inevitably condemn in any body else. Finally, let all parents, from the introductory part

of this paper, consider that it is no disgrace for a son to be dependent on a father's bounty, but that nothing can be more dangerous than for a father to be dependent on a son's.

Nº XXVIII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 20.

THREE is no set of men to whom I have a greater aversion than your professed fayers of *bon mots*, or sputters of *good things*; who go into company for no other reason in nature, but to catch at every little opportunity of being smart, and build a reputation of wit and vivacity upon the harmless peculiarities, or casual indiscretions, of their acquaintance. This species of impertinents, if we properly examine the principles upon which they act, are not more to be despised for the continual air of self-sufficiency they assume, than for the malevolence of their dispositions, in wishing to disconcert, where real good-nature and true politeness should be studious to oblige. Yet, notwithstanding the greatest number of these worthy gentlemen affect a superiority of understanding above the rest of the world, a sensible observer will find, that the very best is seldom more than a squirt charged with the trite relations of despicable jest-books and commonplace remarks, to be let off as occasion may arise, in whatever company it may be their fortune to be introduced.

As the vanity of being admired engrosses their whole ambition, a wit of this class is not less a disagreeable acquaintance than a dangerous friend: he is incapable of confidence; and wherever a secret of the most important nature with which he is trusted, may unhappily interfere with an opportunity of gratifying his natural propensity, his discretion is in an instant kicked down stairs by his pride, and the peace of a whole family, in all probability, sacrificed to an indelicate repartee, or an ignorant joke. Nay, no consideration, either moral or religious, is able to restrain the torrent of his impertinence; and is it not too common a circumstance, that where human obligations afford him no subject of exercising his talents, that he bursts at once through the most awful of the divine, and circulates a daring laugh at the mandates of

his God! In short, the most bearable of this fraternity is always a plague to society, and not very seldom a disgrace.

Should we carry our speculations on this subject still farther, it might probably be found, that one half of our modern infidels is produced by the absurd affection of saying a good thing, and the desire of being thought uncommonly shrewd by the generality of the world. In order to effect this, a singularity of opinion is first of all adopted; and the more dangerous this opinion is, the more it answers the purpose of being talked of, and renders the person who adopts it pointed out from the ordinary classes of mankind. This singularity of sentiment of course occasions a singularity of expression; and the consequence at last is, that the unhappy wretch, who thus aims at universal admiration, jests himself out of every sensible and worthy man's esteem here, and laughs away his hopes of hereafter too.

An old school-fellow of mine, poor Dick Brazen, is one of those men whose principal study is to attract the attention of their acquaintance by a smartness of repartee, and a poignancy of satire in the application of a joke. Dick's whole labour, these forty years, has been to make himself a very disagreeable companion; and I cannot help saying he has been no way disappointed in his end. The moment he enters a room, and makes his bow, he sits with the utmost patience to catch at any expression which may admit of a sarcasm; and is sure, without any regard to the condition or sex of the speaker, to use his best endeavours to turn it into ridicule or contempt. If nothing of this kind happens, he makes himself the hero of some little tale, and perhaps tells a hundred impudent stories for the sake of relating what he said upon such and such a circumstance; how he put Lady This-thing out of countenance, with an observation upon a pincushion; and cut up Sir John T'other, with a stroke upon a

snuff-

snuff-box. The worst of all is, the same observation which that celebrated reprobate, the Earl of Rochester, made on Charles the Second, for the continual repetition of his stories, may, with all imaginable justice, be applied to Mr. Brazen. That monarch had a custom of telling every day, in the circle, a thousand trifling occurrences of his youth, and would constantly repeat them over and over again, without the smallest variation; so that such of his courtiers as were acquainted with his majesty's foible, would instantly retreat whenever he began any of his narrations. My Lord Rochester being with him one day, took the liberty of being very severe upon that head—‘ Your majesty,’ says he, ‘ has undoubtedly the best memory in the world; I have heard you repeat the same story, without the variation of a syllable, every day these ten years; but what I think extraordinary is, that you never recollect you generally tell it to the same set

of auditors.’ This is Mr. Brazen’s fault, and indeed the fault of every worthy member of his brotherhood; they are very happy in remembering every good thing they have said, but constantly forget they have retailed it perhaps five hundred times upon the same company.

I shall conclude this paper with an anecdote of the identical Mr. Brazen, whom I have thus taken the liberty of introducing to my readers, and which I think is a general picture of all the clever fellows of this class within the bills of mortality. Being carried to sup one night, by a friend, with a company of very sensible people whom he had never seen before, Dick was so very much pleased, that he was extremely mortified, or, in other words, found no opportunity of exercising his talent for *bon mots*. Being asked to the same party a second time—‘ No, no,’ says he, ‘ I have been disappointed already, and will never sit twice in a company which I cannot laugh at, by G—d.’

Nº XXIX. SATURDAY, AUGUST 27.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

HERE is no necessity so lamentable as where a truly sensible and good man is obliged, from the tyranny of custom, to run into those actions which he both despises and abhors; and is reduced to the dreadful alternative of entailing infamy on his name for life, or bursting at once through the laws of his country, and violating the commands of his God. You will easily apprehend that I intend to trouble you on the fatal consequences of duelling. I do, Sir; and have a tale to unfold that must drench your humanity in tears.

I am the wretched relit of the most amiable of men. Three months ago I was the happiest of my sex!—What am I now?—But you shall hear, Sir. I am a young woman of twenty three, and about five years ago married a most deserving young man of fortune, equal to my own, by whom I have four children, every one—if the doating fondness of a mother may be credited—the little emblem of it’s ever to be regretted father.

During the little space of our marriage, Mr. Wellworth seemed to live for no other purpose but to oblige me; and

I hope it will not be looked upon as vanity, if I say, my everlasting study was to make every thing agreeable to him. In short, Sir, I scarcely imagined a hereafter could add to my felicity, nor formed a single wish beyond the approbation of my husband.

One evening, Sir, Mr. Wellworth supped abroad with a party of friends, and came home with a good-humour which was visibly constrained. However, as he repeatedly assured me that nothing was the matter, I rather accused myself of unnecessary apprehension, than supposed he was really disturbed. That evening he was more than usually tender to me, and paid an extraordinary attention to the children; he went up to the nursery, kissed each separately three or four times, and blessed them with an uncommon energy of expression. We retired in a little time after; and judge my distraction, Mr. Babler, when my woman woke me in the morning with the following letter!—

MY ADORABLE MARIA,

BEFORE this reaches your hands, I am no more. Last night Colonel Melmoth and I had a difference about political

political opinions: he challenged, and laid me under the disagreeable necessity of giving him the meeting. Pity me, my only love. What could I do?—Shame, disgrace, and infamy, hung upon my name, if I refused; though, now that the aweful prospect of eternity opens upon my imagination, I could wish the circumstance undone. An all-gracious, an all-forgiving Deity, will, I humbly hope, however, prove more merciful than a relentless world; and therefore a crime, which from the weakness of humanity, an' the unhappy custom of my country, I was in a manner forced to, may possibly meet with forgiveness above. But must I leave my children?—Must I be torn for ever from my wife?—O Maria! is it possible to imagine how I have loved?—In life you were the only mistress of my heart; in death you possess it wholly too! My strength fails—Colonel Melmoth lies dead!—O Maria! take care of our helpless little innocents; and be sure, when Charley grows up, to inculcate such principles in his mind as may make him avoid the rashness of his father, and sacrifice every consideration to the mandate of his God. And now an everlasting adieu. And may the eternal Father of Mercy shower down his choicest blessings on you, and my poor babes, is the dying prayer of your own

CHARLES WELLWORTH.

What became of me for a whole fortnight after the receipt of this dreadful

letter, Mr. Babler, I cannot pretend to tell. My mother says I was in a state of absolute distraction, and frequently made attempts upon my own life. However, by degrees, they reduced me to something like tranquillity, and argued me into a resolution to live, through a consideration for my children.

Such, Sir, are the consequences of duelling: from being the most fortunate wife in the universe, I have nothing in my imagination now but a slaughtered husband; and from being the happiest mother in the world, I cannot see my little orphans without inconceivable anguish and distress. O, Sir, is this false, this ridiculous punctilio of honour, to be supported not only with the loss of the parties lives, but with the ruin of their families? Why will not gentlemen consider that their rashness not only exposes their own breasts to the sword of their adversaries, but plants it in the bosom of their friends? A man with a wife and children, Sir—abstracted from any consideration of a religious nature—has no right to be lavish of his safety; his life is the property of his family, and is absolutely necessary for their defence. I wish, Sir, the legislative power would take some steps to prevent this horrid custom, and make it an object of their contempt, as well as the mark of their resentment; till this is done, punishment will be ineffectual; and O that it may be speedily done, is the hearty wish of your's, &c.

MARIA WELLWORTH.

Nº XXX. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3.

THREE is nothing at which I am more offended than the unparable vein of ignorance and brutality so generally introduced in our Drinking Songs; nor any thing, in my opinion, which throws a greater reflection upon the understanding of a sensible society. If we examine the principal number of these petty compositions, we shall find that absolute intoxication is recommended as the highest felicity in the world, and receive the most positive assurances of being upon an equality with angels, the very moment we sink ourselves into a situation considerably lower than men.

To look back to the original design

of all poetical composition is needless, since every body knows that it was to praise and honour the Supreme Being with a fervency of devotion, which could not be found in the common form of words. This glorification of the Deity, and the instruction of his creatures, appearing therefore to be the grand view of poetry, how much is it to be lamented, that a science of so sublime a nature should be prostituted to such infamous ends; and, instead of being applied to the purposes of religion and virtue, be directed to the support of a vice productive of innumerable ills!

It has been justly observed, that every nation,

nation, in proportion as it is civilized, has abolished intemperance in wine, and consequently must be barbarous in proportion as it is addicted to excess. The remark, I am rather apprehensive, will be found no very great compliment to the people of this kingdom; we are apt to place good fellowship in riot, and have but too natural a promptitude in imagining, that the happiness of an evening is promoted by an extravagant circulation of the glass: hence are our songs of festivity—as I have already taken notice—fraught with continual encomiums on the pleasures of intoxication, and the whole tribe of Bacchanalian Lyrics perpetually telling us how wonderfully sensible it is to destroy our senses, and how nothing can be more rational in a human creature, than to drink till he has not left himself a single glimmer of reason at all.

But if, abstracted from the brutal intention of our drinking songs in general, we should come to consider their merit as literary performances, how very few of them should we find worth a station on a cobler's stall, or deserving the attention of an auditory at Billingsgate! The best are but so many despicable strings of unmeaning puns and ill-imagined conceits, and betray not more the ignorance of their encouragers, than the barrenness of their authors. Let me only ask the warmest advocate for this species of composition, what, upon a cool reflection, he thinks of the following song—

BY the gaily-circling glas,
We can see how minutes pass:
By the hollow cask we're told,
How the waining night grows old:
Soon, too soon, the busy day,
Calls us from our sports away:
What have we with day to do?
Sons of Care, 'twas made for you.

The foregoing little song, though one of the least offensive in the whole round of a *box vivant* collection, has neither thought nor expression to recom-

mend it; and can, when sung, be termed no more than an agreeable piece of impertinence, calculated to supply a want of understanding in a company. I forbear to mention the Big-bellied Bottle, and a variety of similar productions, which are universally known, and deserve to be as universally despised; but I shall conclude this paper, however, with a song which I would recommend as an example to such gentlemen as are fond of celebrating the grape, though no ways ambitious to do it at the expence of good sense and morality.

THE JUDICIOUS BACCHANAL.

WHILE the bottle to humour and social delight
The smallest assistance can lend;
While it happily keeps up the laugh of the night,
Or enlivens the mind of a friend:
O let me enjoy it, ye bountiful powers!
That my time may deliciously pass;
And should Care ever think to intrude on my hours,
Scare the haggard away with a glass.
But, instead of a rational feast of the sense,
Should Discord preside o'er the bowl;
And Folly debate, or Contention commence,
From too great an expansion of foul:
Should the man I esteem, or the friend of my breast,
In the ivy, feel nought but the rod;
Should I make sweet Religion a profligate jest,
And daringly sport with my God—
From my lips dash the poison, O merciful Fate!
Where the madness or blasphemy hung;
And let every accent which virtue should hate,
Parch quick on my infamous tongue.
From my sight let the curse be eternally driv'n,
Where my reason so fatally stray'd;
That no more I may offer an insult to Heav'n,
Or give a man cause to upbraid.

N^o XXXI. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10.

AN easiness of behaviour through the common occurrences of life, is a point in which almost every person thinks himself an admirable proficient; yet it is nevertheless a matter in which almost every person is very widely deceived. We are all of us too apt to mistake the grossest extremities for the criterion of perfection; and seldom imagine that we have reached the necessary goal of good breeding, till we have left it at an astonishing distance behind.

An endeavour at an extraordinary degree of politeness, is a rock upon which numbers are perpetually splitting; and, what is most surprising, the variety of examples, instead of deterring us from an imitation of the practice, are rather additional incentives for the continuation of the pursuit. Naturally prompt to think we ourselves possess more abilities than our neighbours, we are perpetually solicitous for their being displayed; and confining our observations for ever to the agreeable side of things, we absolutely forget that they have the smallest reverse.

Mrs. Notable, an old widow cousin of my own, is the very quintessence of modern politeness and good-nature. Once every Christmas I have the honour of an invitation among a great number of other relations, and then have a perfect opportunity of contemplating the elaborate ease of this obliging gentlewoman: the moment we enter, she makes it a particular rule to enquire after the health of the whole company, and the instant we are seated, comes regularly round to every individual, and demands a circumstantial account of the minutest occurrence since she had last the happiness of seeing us; if any one by accident has laboured under a slight cold, all the recipes in the *Compleat Housewife* are thundered about our ears, and an infinity of lamentations poured out for so irreparable a misfortune. Unhappily, indeed, at our last meeting, none of us had the least complaint to mention, which I found was a mortification of no trifling kind to my cousin; however, she would not be robbed of an opportunity of shewing both her knowledge and politeness, and therefore in-

troduced her favourite topic with the greatest facility, good-naturedly lamenting a second time for a sore throat, which my sister Rattle had been laid up with the preceding twelvemonth.

But if this preparatory account of Mrs. Notable's politeness has given the reader a high opinion of her character, what will he say, when I carry him through the ceremony of dinner, and touch upon the unremitting solicitude which she manifests for the accommodation of the company? Notwithstanding her table is generally as well supplied as any woman's in the kingdom, and notwithstanding she does not a little pique herself upon the elegance of this annual entertainment, yet the moment it is brought up, we have a thousand excuses made for the poverty of our dinner.

‘ Well! Lord! I don't believe you can touch a bit on't—but you are so good—though I wonder how you come a second time to a place so utterly unprovided!’ This we understand as a proper cue to praise every thing before us, and then are obliged to stand a whole volley of encomiums on our extraordinary goodness; till at last, when we have in a manner half burst ourselves, and are told how very little we have eat, a fresh concern for the badness of our entertainment concludes the feast, and relieves us a little from the fatigue of such extraordinary politeness.

How widely different is the conduct of Sir Harry Downright? From an utter aversion to ceremony, he becomes actually the rudest fellow alive; and when he borders upon a brutality of behaviour, calls it an easiness arising from good-nature and friendly familiarity. In the company of the ladies he sits constantly covered; never helps a soul at his own table, though he has an absolute stranger at dinner; nor ever makes any scruple to tell a woman she lies, in plain English. As Sir Harry would not be thought a coxcomb for the universe, he carefully avoids the smallest indication of that character in his appearance: he seldom shaves above once a week, scarcely ever combs his hair, chews an enormous quantity of tobacco, and makes a point of going into well-dressed com-

panies with a dirty shirt. Upon the whole, to escape the imputation of ceremonious, he becomes in all places offensive; and for fear of deviating into an effeminate puppy, as he calls it, he throws off all pretensions to decency, and sinks into an absolute brute.

The extrémes of behaviour are what every person of sense should cautiously study to avoid; since an excess of ceremony cannot fail of subjecting us to ridicule; and a total disregard of polite-

ness must naturally expose us to contempt: difficult, however, as the proper system of conduct may appear, I shall be bold enough to lay down one rule, which will, in my opinion, entirely comprise it, and serve as a just conclusion to the present paper. In all companies, let a man endeavour to please, rather than expect to be pleased; and if this does not gain him many friends, I shall not scruple to affirm, that it will never procure him a single enemy.

Nº XXXII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17.

FILIAL piety is a flower of so delicate a nature, that we meet but very few places which can produce it; and though we frequently hear of parents who ruin themselves for the sake of their children, yet we seldom or ever hear of children who do any extraordinary acts of kindness to their parents. Perhaps nature has formed the parental sensibility infinitely more exquisite than the filial, and, for some wise purpose, implanted a much greater fondness on our minds for those we beget and educate, than for those by whom we are begotten and educated ourselves: at least, custom has firmly established such different sentiments relative to the behaviour of parent and child, that it is thought a matter of the highest praise in a wealthy son to settle a paltry fifty pound for life on a distressed and worthy father; but an action of little or no merit in a father to settle twenty times the sum upon an indigent son. I supped last night at my sister Rattle's, where I generally hear something new, and was entertained by my nephew Harry with the following exception to the foregoing position, which I flatter myself will prove no disagreeable relation to my readers.

An eminent merchant, whose name I think necessary to conceal under that of Webley, married a most amiable woman, with whom he received a considerable fortune, and by whom he was blessed in the first year with a daughter, called Maria: Mrs. Webley, however, unhappily catching a cold during the time of her lying-in, did not long survive the birth of her child, but died in about three months after; with her last breath conjuring her husband to be par-

ticularly attentive to the welfare of the unfortunate little Maria.

Mr. Webley, for two years before his marriage, had been connected with a subtle deligning woman, by whom he also had a daughter; nor did his having a wife put an end to the guilty intercourse: under pretence of important business, he frequently staid in town with her a night or two in the week, while Mrs. Webley was down at the country-house in Hertfordshire; and as frequently carried her into the country with him, whenever he knew his lady could not conveniently leave town. His marriage, in fact, was rather an engagement of interest, than a union of inclination; and Mrs. Webley's fortune enabling him to live up to the summit of his wishes, the moment she was interred, he thought there was no farther necessity for restraint or disguise. In short, six weeks had scarcely elapsed, when he married the abandoned woman we have been speaking of, and pitched upon the most profligate of her sex to supply the place of the very best.

We shall pass over the time of Maria's infancy, when she experienced little more than the diminutive cruelty of a narrow-minded mother-in-law, and come at once to that period which may be justly reckoned the most important of her life. She had just entered on her eighteenth year, and was blooming into all the perfections of her sex, when Mrs. Webley began to think of executing a scheme which she had long in agitation. She saw Maria treated by every body with the greatest respect; and beheld her own daughter, though dressed out in all the fashionable poppery

of

of the times, and infinitely more attended to, received with a degree of insipid civility that bordered upon contempt. The shameful neglect which Maria experienced at home, gave a constant lustre to her merit when abroad; and if she found no kind of countenance in her own family, she met with the highest in every other place. This was a circumstance which galled Mrs. Webley to the very soul; and being, moreover, fearful that the regard so universally shewn to Maria would be a means of obstructing any favourable addresses which might be made to her own daughter, she took a speedy opportunity of quarrelling with that unhappy young lady; and being, as the generality of those of her principles most commonly are, both master and mistress of the house, very fairly turned her out of doors. Maria was not, however, destitute of a protector, though she had lost a father. A young fellow, with a good understanding and a splendid estate, who had long solicited her favourable opinion, and gained it, took that opportunity of pressing for her hand, and was made the happiest of men.

Maria was married about five years; during which time, though she had often entreated for a reconciliation, she never could be admitted to the presence of her father; when, taking up the Gazette one Saturday evening, she met with his name amongst the list of bankrupts, and instantly fainted on the floor: she was, however, soon brought to herself; when, forgetting in a moment how she had been turned out upon the charity of an inhospitable world, and exposed to the most pinching poverty and disgrace; how for a series of years she had been treated as an alien to her father's family, and even denied the most trivial necessaries, while strangers were rioting on her mother's fortune; she flew to her husband, whose happiness was centered in obliging her, and painting out the miserable situation of her father, obtained his consent to settle three hundred a year, out of a sum which he would

allow her for pin-money, on him, to alleviate so distressing an incident. With this she immediately took coach, and proceeded to her father's: the door was now thrown open at her approach; and being introduced to the old gentleman's presence, they gazed upon one another for some moments, and then burst into a mutual flood of tears,

Mr. Webley's misfortunes had opened his eyes to the strangeness of his conduct, and nobody could be more ready to condemn it than himself. What, then, must we judge his emotions to be, when a daughter, whom he had left destitute of bread, came to offer him a genteel allowance for life; and the same eyes which he had steeped in tears of the keenest distress, came to fill his with drops of unutterable joy? His gratitude as a man, his feelings as a father, instantly rushed upon his soul; he dried his eyes, looked full in his daughter's face for some moments, then capering about the room with the plenzy of a bedlamite, burst afresh into tears. Suffice it, however, that after his affairs were settled, he retired into the country upon this yearly allowance, but did not live long enough to enjoy the first quarter: the mortification of being a bankrupt, the consciousness of his family errors, and, finally, the very generosity of his daughter, which was intended to sweeten the remainder of his life, proved a means of hurrying him to his end; the agitation of his mind threw the gout into his stomach, and he died in Maria's arms, in the fiftieth year of his age. His wife and daughter now thought themselves utterly undone; but Maria, with a greatness of mind peculiar to herself, in an instant dispelled their apprehensions, by a continuation of two hundred a year during her life; and, without ever stooping to hint any thing of their former behaviour, told them, that they must consider it as no compliment, since she looked upon it as an indispensable duty, which she ought to pay to the memory of her father.

Nº XXXIII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am a constant reader of your productions; and have conceived such an opinion of your regard for the poor women, that I am resolved to trouble you with an account of my situation, especially as it is possible that several of my sex are labouring under the same anxieties, and that this letter may be productive of some happy consequences to them, however it may fail in being any way advantageous to me.

You must know, Sir, that about three years ago I was married to a man of distinguished understanding, as well as considerable fortune; and therefore looked upon by all my friends to be very happily settled for life. My husband's known good sense, Sir, and the affluence of his circumstances, were considered by every body as indubitable securities for my felicity, and there was scarcely a young lady of my acquaintance who did not envy me so favourable a match.

I had not, however, been married above a month, Sir, before I found myself treated with a palpable indifference, and cut off from all those rational enjoyments, which I flattered myself with possessing in the continual society of so sensible a husband. Instead of entertaining me, as he was formerly accustomed, with instructive relations of men and things, he grew silent and reserved; and, instead of the continual vivacity with which his looks had before been animated, nothing now appeared upon his brow but a settled air of the most perfect disregard, or a supercilious smile of contempt. I was for a long time at a loss to account for so surprising an alteration of temper; and you may be sure, as I passionately loved Mr. Highmore, such a change must have given me many an uneasy moment, particularly as I studied, with all possible care, to keep my anxiety concealed. It was a mortifying circumstance, Mr. Babler, if I asked a tender question, to be answered with a blunt *Yes*, or *No*; to be told I teased him, if I enquired after his health; and to have my

hand tossed away with an ill-natured 'Pshaw,' if I presumed to take hold of his, or attempted to regulate any little article of his dress. At last, Sir, the mystery was unravelled; I overheard him one day talking to an intimate friend of his about the follies of the fair-sex, declaring that the very best were a most contemptible pack of creatures, much below the notice of a man of understanding—' For my part,' says he ' I suppose myself as happily married as any body of my acquaintance; but still a wife is no more than a woman; and as such, though a necessary animal, she is consequently below the regard of a man of common speculation.'

Having thus discovered the occasion of Mr. Highmore's indifference, I resolved to render myself as worthy of his attention as I could, by conversing on the most important subjects I was able: for this purpose I would occasionally cite a passage from our celebrated writers, and deliver my opinion on historical events, poetical composition, and such other parts of literature as I thought would be most agreeable to the temper I saw him in. But, alas! Sir, instead of finding his humour abated by this solicitude to please, I had the misfortune to see it visibly increased: if I quoted a passage from any author, he smiled; if I pretended to judge, he tittered; but if I was insolent enough to differ from the minutest opinion of his, he either flew out of the house, or politely laughed in my face. Every casual impropriety of accent he was sure to ridicule; and those little grammatical inaccuracies which women cannot always avoid, were everlasting objects of contempt. Failing in my endeavours here, I attempted to engage him in a variety of amusements, but in vain. If I proposed the play, women only diverted his attention from the business of the performance; if I proposed a walk in the park, women truly were pretty companions to dangle with in public; if I mentioned a game at cards, fools only had recourse to diversions of that kind. In short, Sir, let me start what I would, either

either the meanness of my understanding, or the greatness of his own, was sure of defeating all my views, and nothing was happy enough to merit his approbation but what immediately proceeded from himself. For this last twelvemonth, Sir, Mr. Highmore has commenced *bon vivant*, and sat till three or four o'clock every morning with a select party of friends, who are eminent in the world for their literary abilities; as it is a fundamental principle with those extraordinary gentlemen, never to part, while they are able to sit together. Irregularity and intemperance have so impaired the constitution of my poor Mr. Highmore, that I am terrified to death at the bare supposition of the consequences. His employment all day is to recover from the excesses of the preceding evening, and his business all

night to provide an indisposition for the next day.

For God's sake, Mr. Babler, say something about those men of sense who look upon women to be idiots, and yet are guilty of actions that would make the meanest of us ashamed. Is this superiority of understanding, Sir, upon which the generality of your sex so highly pique themselves, to be pleaded as an eternal excuse for indiscretions and errors, and no allowance to be made for the little failings of the poor women, though we are treated continually as fools?

I could say a great deal, Sir, on this subject; but fearing to trespass too much upon your leisure, I shall take my leave, and am, your humble servant,

ARABELLA HIGHMORE.

N^o XXXIV. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

SINGULARITY is so much the affectation of the present æra, that there is scarcely an individual but what strikes out a plan of operation for himself, and exhibits a particular something in his character that marks him in a distinct manner from every body else. This endeavour at singularity, let the circumstance be what it will in which we display it, is always the result of much pride and little understanding; it proceeds from a despicable ambition to be talked of; and, like the Ephesian youth, so we hear our name bandied about from mouth to mouth, it becomes a matter of indifference how we are mentioned, whether for erecting a temple to the Deity, or for setting one in flames.

Among many instances which I have remarked of subaltern singularity in the course of my own acquaintance, the foundation of poor Ned Totter's fame is one of the most extraordinary. Ned, for these last twenty years, has not touched a morsel of butcher's meat, his diet consisting chiefly of fish, fowl, and vegetables; and this bare circumstance has been a constant source of self-exultation ever since: when he comes into

company, he watches for every opportunity of relating this meritorious act of abstinence, and is particularly pleased if any strangers happen to be present to bless him with a stare of astonishment, which he looks upon as the highest indication of applause. I have frequently known him run about from coffee-house to coffee-house, in order to meet with a fresh admirer; and engage a whole table of politicians with a discourse upon the peculiarities of all the crowned heads in Europe, that he might turn the conversation of his auditory at last upon the strangeness of his own. A very sensible young fellow, who has studied his ruling passion, takes every occasion of indulging it, and leads him with a preparatory discourse to a constant mention of his favourite subject; this has made the young fellow so extremely agreeable to my old friend, that upon a fit of illness some time ago, he set him down very handsomely in his will, and appointed him one of his executors. Various are the circumstances I could tell of this affected singularity. Tom Steady has made it a point, every day since the last rebellion, to take a view of Temple Bar, and indulge himself with a sight of the heads. This extraordinary mark of his affection for the government has answered his

His wishes; it has been talked of a thousand times among his acquaintance, and Tom is at once the truest subject, and the happiest man, in the kingdom. Frank Loiter has rendered himself immortal for lounging about Westminster Hall during term time. Will Careless is universally celebrated for having his stockings hanging continually about his heels; and my ingenious friend, Mr. Thomas Clough, of Drury-Lane Theatre, is talked of by all the world for never missing an execution at Tyburn.

But if singularity in trivial occurrences is so certain of making us ridiculous, an affection of particular vices, through a desire of appearing singular, cannot surely fail of rendering us odious, as well as despicable, in the eyes of the world, and occasion every rational person to view us with abhorrence, as well as contempt; yet, notwithstanding the consequences are so evident and positive, what numbers do we not continually observe establishing their character upon a foundation like this? What myriads does not every day's experience point out, who are ambitious to be thought rascals as well as fools, and seek the public admiration in some singularity of behaviour for which they ought to be hanged?

Of this number is that celebrated li-

bertine, Sir Charles Riot. Sir Charles is possessed of a handsome figure, an extensive understanding, and a plentiful estate; yet, with all these advantages to gain an honest reputation, his whole study is to acquire a character from the destruction of every family he is admitted into; and his only ambition to become conspicuous from the number and blackness of his crimes. In one house he has ruined two sisters, the daughters of a most intimate friend: in another he has debauched the wife of a man, to whom he is indebted for no less than his life.

These actions are universally spoken of; but, so far from being ashamed, our hopeful baronet thinks the mention of them a compliment to his personal qualifications; and always makes gallantry the subject of his conversation, that somebody may take notice of the laurels he has won in that extensive field of real infamy, and imaginary applause.

Singularity, Mr. Babler, unfortunately for us, is to be met with in every thing but the virtues, and these being so very rare to be met with themselves, to talk of it further than as it concerns our follies and our vices, would be unnecessary; for which reason I shall drop the subject here, and stir myself, Your's &c.

SAM. SPECULIST.

N^o XXXV. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8.

TO THE BABELER.

SIR,
YOU seem a friendly good-natured sort of a man; and I have often heard my grandson repeat, with a great deal of satisfaction, many pretty things out of your writings; and Tom, though I say it, is a very sensible lad, has been three years at a Latin school, and is, moreover, as dutiful a child as any in England. But, to the purpose.

You must know, Mr. Babler, I am, and have been a long time, offended with the custom of keeping holidays at particular festivals, because it is productive of many evils, and cannot possibly do any good. It is merely an encouragement to the vicious and profligate, instead of exciting any principle of morality or religion; and, perhaps, it would

not be going too far, if I asserted, that there are more enormities committed at Christmases, Easter, and Whitsuntide, than can be expiated by the virtues of the whole year besides. I am led to this subject from some domestic occurrences, during the course of the two holidays in the Whitsun-week; with which, since I have taken the liberty of troubling you, I shall endeavour to make amends for trespassing on the patience of your readers.

Breakfast was no sooner over on Whitsun Monday, than my maid Hannah came up stairs, and begged leave to pass the remainder of the day with some relations of her's, who had made a party for Fulham. As the girl was a very good servant, I not only granted the request, but made her a present of half a crown towards defraying the expences of the excursion;

excursion; she thanked me, promised to return early in the evening, and set out. About nine o'clock I expected her home, but no Hannah came, Mr. Babler; ten struck, and still there was no sign of her appearance; eleven struck, but no Hannah, Sir. I can't say but I was terrified, lest some accident should have happened to the poor girl; and therefore sent my Tom, with the other maid Nanny, to her sister's, a discreet, sober sort of a young woman, who keeps a chandler's shop within two or three streets. All that this produced was new uneasiness. The sister knew nothing of her; heard of no party she was engaged in, and seemed to be frightened out of her wits. On this report, I went to bed; but desired Nanny to wait up till twelve o'clock; she did, but to no purpose: Hannah never came near the house since, Sir; and we have lately discovered that she went out with a footman belonging to an officer that day, instead of going with any relations; that she dined with this sorry fellow at Chelsea; where, after dinner, he persuaded her to drink a glass or two of punch, which had such an effect upon her, being utterly unused to strong liquors, as rendered it absolutely necessary for her to be put to bed. No doubt the whole was a design of the artful villain's; for she was no sooner under the blankets, than he stepped, without any ceremony, into bed too; and destroyed, in one moment, that reputation which the unhappy creature had preserved unsuspected for a whole life. When she had recovered the use of her reason, shame and distraction prevented her from coming home; and, thinking the worst that could had now happened, she retired with her betrayer to a little room in a hedge alehouse, where she continued with him ever since; refusing either to see her sister, or return to her place, though I sent her word I should take her back again, if she left the villain, and would give an absolute promise never to have any intercourse with him for the future.

Such, Mr. Babler, is the consequence of holiday-making—and now suffer an old woman to make two or three cursory remarks. I remember my first husband, and as honest a man he was as ever broke the world's bread, used to say, poor man! that the Church, by the

institution of holidays, perverted it's own design, and laid in reality a snare to destroy, where it meant to improve, the morals of the people. Indeed, Sir, I am perfectly of opinion with Mr. Robinson; holidays were originally instituted to inspire a solemn sense of religious duties, and to give those a favourable opportunity of prosecuting their devotions at particular seasons, whose necessary avocations might prevent them from so constant an attendance as they might possibly wish at other times; but let me ask, Sir, if the end of the Church is answered in the least? Do our young people go to church on holidays? Alas! Sir, they consider a holiday as an absolute exemption from every concern of a religious kind; and a sort of licence to indulge every depravity of their sentiments! Do our old people go to church on holidays? Very few, Sir; they are employed in cards and festivity; and so far is the verge of that eternity, upon which they totter, from making any salutary impressions on their minds, that though I have not missed church a single day these thirty years, yet at the three grand festivals, I have observed it to be worse attended than at any other season of the year: a few superannuated women, like myself, have composed the whole congregation; and even the clergyman has run over the service in such a preposterous hurry, that I have often thought he was impatient to mix in the customary riots of his parishioners.

Seeing, therefore, Mr. Babler, that holidays, so far from answering, rather defeat the purposes of religion; and knowing also how destructive they are to the community, by encouraging a shameful idleness among all ranks of people, (the lower order particularly, whose families must be material sufferers by the smallest neglect) I think that every consideration, both divine and human, should induce us to lay them aside, since nothing can be more scandalous, than to set a season apart for the support both of idleness and irreligion; and nothing more repugnant to wisdom or virtue, than to sanctify, as one may say, a time for prejudicing the fortunes, and corrupting the morals of the people. I am, Mr. Babler, your humble servant,

RACHAEL REDMAN.

N^o XXXVI. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15.

AN excess of sensibility, though nothing can be more amiable than a feeling heart, is perhaps one of the greatest misfortunes which the human mind can labour under, because there is an everlasting source of objects to interest it's tenderness, and a constant round of accidents to work upon it's fears. Happily, indeed, we are not overstocked with people who possess this quality to any extraordinary degree; but the few who do, might possibly, for their own sakes, as well as the happiness of others, be much better if they were endued with no sensibility at all.

Poor Tom Frankly is a striking proof of this observation: at one and twenty he stepped into an estate of fifteen hundred pounds a year, and was looked upon by every body as a very promising young fellow; before the year was out, however, Tom's excessive sensibility made him find out all the necessitous; and whether their poverty was the fault of their ill-fortune, or the consequence of their crimes; whether they were to be pitied or condemned, he was indifferent in his relief: indigence was a never-failing recommendation, and the villain professed tasted equally of his bounty with the worthiest of men: his character once known, the parasite and the gambler were continually at his table, and working on his humanity with unceasing repetitions of penury and want. Fraud was perpetually pestering him with letters of supplication, and the loosest prostitutes of the town teased his ears for ever with imaginary amendments and artifical distress; his hand was still open to all; and though his friends very frequently remonstrated on the injudicious distribution of his fortune, his answer was eternally, that he could not bear to see any bosom swelled with affliction, nor any eye reddening with wretchedness and despair. In less than ten years, however, his estate was reduced to a fifteenth part of it's worth; the great decay of his own circumstances now obliged him to be less attentive to the affairs of other people; and seeing that nothing but beggary was before him, if he went on much farther, he bound himself under a large

penalty never to give away above a tenth part of the pitiful little hundred a year which was left: this he constantly disposes of in halfpence and pence to the common beggars; and the moment it is expended, locks himself up in his room, to avoid both the sight and importunity of these vagrant mendicants, till the receipt of his next year's supply.

Lady Catherine Nettleworth is another instance of excessive sensibility, but it is, however, entirely confined to her children, and her lap-dogs; if one of the young gentlemen goes abroad, she is under the most violent agitation, lest some accident should happen in the shortest excursion; if he goes in the coach, she is in a continual uneasiness for fear it should overset; if he rides, her apprehension is equally alive, lest the horse should unhappily take fright; if he walks, she dreads the consequence of the fatigue; and let the day be either wet or dry, she trembles alike with a terror of his catching cold, or being parched to death with the sun. In order to quiet herself in all these different respects, she sometimes keeps the young gentlemen within doors for a whole week; but then she is miserable in the other extreme; she sickens, lest they should suffer for want of exercise; and dies, for fear they should be stifled for want of air: at table, if they eat hearty, she dreads their being surfeited; and is wretched, from a supposition of being indisposed, if they do not. In fact, whatever they do, she seldom has a moment's peace, for thinking about their welfare; and, wherever she goes, rarely suffers any body else to enjoy a moment's satisfaction, for talking about their various accomplishments.

Her concern for her lap-dogs is no less remarkable than her solicitude about her children: if the maid neglects to comb them twice a day, she flies into the vapours; or suffers them to go into a damp room, she falls into fits. In short, there is scarcely a circumstance in which her sensibility is not creating her a new scourge of disquiets; nor a friend in the world whom she does not render unhappy with her endless apprehensions and complaints. Upon the whole, I

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may with certainty enough conclude this paper as I set out, with affirming, that an excess of sensibility (amiable soever as it is to have a feeling heart) is productive of so many uneasinesses to ourselves, and so many inquietudes to

our friends, that it would in reality be much better for those who labour under it, to be unacquainted with the finer feelings, and to have little or no sensibility at all.

Nº XXXVII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am a plain young fellow near the Monument, and have been courting a most agreeable girl in the neighbourhood for above six months; but what surprizes me is, that though she receives the visits of no other suitor as I can discover, and is generally upon some little party of pleasure with myself, I can by no means bring her to a candid declaration of her sentiments, nor find out whether or no she designs me for a husband. Every question that has a tendency to explain matters, she avoids with the greatest address, and flies out into a violent passion if I press it with any degree of earnestness or importunity.

All this time, Sir, I am spending my money, losing my time, and neglecting my business. I have been obliged to squire her to Vauxhall or Ranelagh two or three times a week; and, because I would do matters genteelly, have kept the coach in waiting at each of those places the whole evening: this, and the other necessary expences, bear a little heavy on the pocket of a tradesman, Mr. Babler, who has no ambition to appear in the London Gazette, though accompanied or ushered in with the truly respectable name of Robert Earl of Northington.

When I first commenced an humble servant of my adorable's, I thought it abundantly sufficient to propose a walk in the Park, or a dish of tea at the White Conduit House; and imagined a prudent consideration for the main chance would recommend me to her good opinion, especially as she had but a very small fortune of her own; and knew, upon that account, the necessity there was for a little economy. But, lack-a-day, Sir, the White Conduit House was reported to by nothing but barbers boys, or mantuamakers apprentices; and for a walk in the Park, she

never could be able to crawl so far; she hated draggling through the streets, and could not bear to be tossed about at the discretion of every clumsy porter, or odious Irish chairman. This was a broad hint; and, therefore, hoping to bring her to an immediate compliance by the appearance of generosity, I gave into her humour; and coached it about so unceasingly, that she now looks upon it as an indispensable compliment which I am obliged to pay, and never stirs without a carriage out of doors. This is not all, Mr. Babler; she has lately got a knack of stopping at goldsmiths shops, and at milliners of her acquaintance; there she has fallen in love with a variety of little knick-knacks, which, like a blockhead, I have foolishly complimented her with; and no later than last week, Sir, it cost me sixteen guineas for a diamond hoop-ring, and five for some little paltry article in her head-dress.

These expences, and the uncertainty I am in with respect to her inclinations, have made me very serious, Sir; for though I love her with the utmost sincerity, and would marry her to-morrow without a sixpence, still I must have some regard for myself too, and prevent in time the destruction of my little fortune, and the laughter of the world into the bargain. I have therefore taken the liberty, Sir, of troubling you with a few questions, by the advice of my friend Tom Watkinson, as he constantly takes in your entertaining paper, and speaks in the handsomest manner of your good-nature and abilities.

Be so good then to tell me, if it is not very culpable in any woman, who intends to marry an admirer, to drive him on expences considerably beyond what she knows can be afforded by his circumstances?

ANS. Yes.

Q. Is it not to the last degree scandalous for a woman, if she does not intend

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tend to marry an admirer, to faddle him with continual parties of pleasure, and to receive presents of value from him at every opportunity?

A. Yes.

Q. Is not the woman who does the first, a wife utterly improper for any man that has a fortune to lose?

A. Yes.

Q. And is not the woman who does the second, a wife too despicable for any man at all?

A. Yes.

Q. Would you advise me, at the next interview with my goddess, in spite of

every frown of disdain, or toss of resentment, to demand a peremptory answer whether she is willing to have me or no?

A. Yes.

Q. If she should happen to consent, would you advise me to marry her?

A. This question is useless, being sufficiently answered by the first and third queries.

Q. Would you marry a woman yourself, Mr. Babler, who had acted like my adorable?

A. By no manner of means.

Nº XXXVIII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29.

THE following complaint is so just and general, that I shall make no apology for laying it before my readers.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am an unhappy poor rascal, and have, to my unspeakable mortification, been married these three years to a woman of extraordinary piety and virtue. Don't be surprised—I am neither angry with her piety, nor offended with her virtue; on the contrary, I revere her for both these qualifications; but they are attended with consequences so very disagreeable, that I frequently wish, when provoked beyond all bounds, that she had been indebted to Billingsgate or Bow Street for the rudiments of her education.

I am, you must know, Sir, a haberdasher, just set up at the polite end of the town; where, with a little industry, I have a very reasonable prospect of making a pretty tolerable fortune. I am very assiduous in business myself, and wish I could say as much for my wife. But, lack-a-day, instead of minding the duties of the shop, when I am trotting up and down with a parcel of goods, her ladyship runs out to her devotions to some neighbouring church or chapel, and trusts the care of every thing to an ignorant apprentice, or a giddy-headed journeywoman. What is worse, upon these occasions, Sir, her sanctity renders her commonly as cross as the very devil; and if I say a single syllable, I am sure to hear a volley of charitable ejaculations for the welfare

of my poor soul, and to be treated the remainder of the whole day like a downright reprobate.

You would imagine, however, Sir, that when she does come home, she might be kind enough to favour me with a little of her assistance, and to cast an eye over the regulation of my family. Far different is the case; the moment she comes in, she retires to her room, and there wastes away the time till dinner over some stupid compilation of enthusiastic prayers, or some ignorant rhapsody made use of at her conventicles: there, profoundly wrapt in dirt and meditation, she imagines herself discharging the great employment of her life, and never casts a single thought upon the miserable poor dog her husband, or the unhappy little wretches her children.

I have spoke of her, Mr. Babler, as being wrapt up in dirt and meditation. I said no more than the truth; for the filthiness of her person is equal to the piety of her sentiments. Looking down with disdain upon every sublunary enjoyment, she thinks it beneath her to pay the least attention to her dress; and upon this principle it is, that hardly once in three months she puts on either a clean cap or a light-coloured apron. A rusty old cardinal serves her for a coverlet as often as she goes out; and as for her appearance at home, she kindly imagines that any thing is good enough to wear before her husband; nay, Sir, sometimes she won't wash her hands or face in a whole fortnight; and you shall judge what a condition her arms were in, upon

upon one of these occasions, when a surgeon in the neighbourhood, who came to bleed her, mistook the dirt for antiquated kidskin, and desired she would take off her gloves.

From the preceding little sketch of my amiable helpmate, Mr. Babler, you may judge that her conduct has as great an effect upon my mind, as an impression on my circumstances; and consequently, that I am never easy without being abroad, though I know the absolute necessity for my attendance at home upon business. I am cut off in my own house from every little comfort of society, and of course must have an inclination of seeking it somewhere else. I cannot ask a friend to breakfast, dine, or sup with me. My own stomach is constantly turned when I sit down to table, and that I think abundantly sufficient, without striving to disgust my acquaintance. Besides, from an utter neglect of the most domestic concern, let me say what I will, I can never get a joint of meat properly dressed, but have it brought up without being heated half through, or else entirely done to rags.

Thus situated, as I said before, I take every opportunity of going abroad, and this opens a fresh source of inconvenience and anxiety. My wife, to crown my misfortunes, is uncommonly fond of me; and if I either dine or sup from home, is sure of being constantly in tears. Yet, Sir, this home she makes intolerable; for even after shop-hours,

if I oblige her by staying within, I meet fresh instances of mortification. Mirth and good-humour are banished from my doors; a harmless joke is considered as a sinful levity; and an innocent laugh prohibited as wholly anti-christian. The case is not mended neither, if, in conformity to her humour, I wear a grave aspect; for then, Sir, she either teases me to death with unnecessary apprehensions about my health, or reproaches me with being ill-natured, because I am confined to her company. Any way she is sure of finding fault, and any way I am equally certain of being rendered miserable.

Is there no means, Mr. Babler, of curing this unaccountable malady of being righteous overmuch? Is there no means of convincing these narrow-minded women, that a moroseness of temper, or a disregard of rational enjoyments, are in no manner encouraged by the sentiments of religion; but that, on the contrary, a sweetnes of disposition, and an endeavour to discharge the necessary duties of a wife and mother, are particularly some of its most beautiful characteristics. I do not think this subject would be unworthy the pen of our most eminent divines. Suffer me, through your paper, to beg some of them will consider it, since it is more likely that a lesson on this matter will come with more weight from the pulpit than any other quarter. Your most humble servant,

AN UNFORTUNATE HUSBAND.

Nº XXXIX. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5.

THE impressions which are made upon the human mind, during it's earliest states, being seldom if ever to be entirely eradicated, there is nothing in which we ought to be more careful than the education of our children, particularly in their infancy, when habits, in the strictest sense of the term, become an absolute part of our nature, and prejudices not only find a refuge in the heart, but twist themselves imperceptibly round it's very strings.

I remember, when I was about four or five years of age, my grandmother took me entirely under her own care; and as the good woman, like the generality of her sex at that period, had a firm belief

in witches, spirits, and hobgoblins, she frequently entertained me with a variety of their pretty performances; and, if I happened to be any ways untoward, constantly threatened to send me to Robin Greenway. This Mr. Robin Greenway was formerly a journeyman taylor in the neighbourhood, who had gone distracted for love, as the people said, and in one of his desperate fits cut his throat in the parson's garden. Various were the tricks related of this unhappy enamorato; sometimes he came in a storm, and threw a parcel of bricks down his sweetheart's chimney; at other times he assumed the figure of a grey mare; and at others, that of a spotted

H 2 spaniel;

Spaniel; but his most favourite mode of appearance was the form of an overgrown calf. Ridiculous as these accounts must have been inevitably considered on the smallest reflection, yet my poor grandmother believed them all with the most religious certainty, and thought it an indispensable part of her duty to make me believe them too. In this she succeeded to the utmost of her wishes: I was ten years old before I would venture to sleep alone; fourteen, before I had courage enough to go to bed in the dark; and to this very hour, if I happen to be by myself, the clock never strikes twelve at night, but I think of Robin Greenway, or some other worshipful member of the same community, to whom the blessing of an untimely death has granted a privilege of taking what form, and playing what tricks, he pleases till the cock crows next morning.

It would be unnecessary for me to observe, that nine out of every ten who may be turned of fifty, have like myself, in their infancy, been trained up in the greatest dread of spirits; and that the utmost exertion of their reason, upon arriving at years of maturity, has not been sufficient to erase the impressions which have then been unhappily made upon their imagination. Fortunately, however, the good sense of the present æra has provided the most effectual spells for our ghosts and spectres, and laid so many of them so effectually in the Red Sea, that harmless little boys may for the future sleep in the most perfect security, and the honest country people traverse the remotest church-yard after midnight without the smallest apprehension.

But, notwithstanding we have in a great measure got the better of our ghosts, there are yet some prejudices, and those of a very dangerous tendency, which we have in a manner substituted in their room, and which it would be much to our honour in this life, and to our happiness in the next, if we could get the better of too. These are the shameful indulgencies to which we think ourselves entitled on Sundays. In the

days of spectres and hobgoblins, we thought ourselves under an indispensable necessity of paying some regard to the Sabbath; and every man was obliged to pay a fine who omitted going to church that day, unless he could palliate his conduct by some very feasible excuse; but, now-a-days, Sunday is the time particularly set apart for riot and festivity; and the day, rendered holy by the express appointment of Omnipotence, is often peculiarly appropriated for the great violation of it's laws. Has a great man a journey to make, or a company to invite, Sunday is an idle day, and he fixes either upon that. Has a woman of fashion an inclination to strip her best friends of the money which ought to pay a tradesman's bill, she sends cards for Sunday evening. And has a petty little mechanic a mind to cut a figure, why he hires his horse, takes out his strumpet, and gets drunk on Sunday evening too.

In the inferior orders of life, there is a notion generally prevalent, that cards are very monstrous on a Sunday; and there are many well-meaning people who would not, upon any consideration, sit down to a party of whist. None of my readers will imagine, I dare say, that I want from this to extenuate the infamous custom of card-playing on the Sabbath of God. All that I want is, to shew the lower classes of the people, that leaping in the fields, playing at cricket, riding horse-matches on the roads, and getting drunk on that day, is every whit as criminal as the propensity to cards, which they so highly censure in their superiors; that any of those exercises which they think allowable, is rather more indecent, because more publicly practised, and may in reality be attended with infinitely worse effects. Let them, therefore, (if it be in vain to preach to the politer world) first of all, reform in these points of behaviour on Sundays themselves, before they pretend to arraign the conduct of the great; and, instead of discovering the mote in the eye of their neighbour, sit attentively down to pluck the beam out of their own.

N^o XL. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12.

I have been strongly solicited to give the following letter a place, which I have unwillingly complied with, notwithstanding the apparent utility of its intention, as I am fearful it will affect rather too many of my readers among the venerable part of the fair-sex, who have been in the decline of life unhappily too susceptible of tender impressions, though they have lost the power of creating any impressions of such a nature themselves.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

In what manner to tell you my unfortunate story I know not; shame and confusion forbid me to whisper it to the very winds; but a just concern for the happiness of others has worked upon my humanity, and wrings the melancholy secret from my heart. You must know, Mr. Babler, I am a woman of some birth, had once a little beauty, and, what was infinitely more important in the eye of the world, a very affluent fortune. At the age of twenty-one, I married the most amiable of men, with whom I lived in an uninterrupted round of felicity for six and thirty years. During that period we had four sons and three daughters, who are all provided for, both splendidly and fortunately, in the world, and enjoy the fullest sweets of opulence in the midst of the most perfect content.

About nine months ago, Sir—O that I had not survived to recollect a time that now brings Basilisks to my imagination, and murders the most distant beam of comfort with a glance!—the man with whom I had lived so happily, and so long, fell ill of a fever, and died in ten days. My distraction at his loss was inexpressible; yet, when my future conduct comes to be mentioned, I shall be suspected of disingenuity, if I say I was concerned at it at all; but, believe me, I felt every thing a woman, endued with the most exquisite sensibility, could possibly experience on so tender and afflicting an occasion; and was reduced so low by the conflict which my mind had undergone, that when the physicians prescribed the Bath waters, it was

universally thought I should not hold out to the journey's end.

Providence, however, which designed that I should stand a warning to my sex, to the surprize of my whole family, worked a miracle almost in favour of my health; and in about three months I was so perfectly recovered, that I came up to town, and seemed not only to have left every trace of my indisposition behind, but the principal marks of my age too; in short, every body complimented me on the life of my looks, and raked the latent embers of vanity, which had a long, long time, lain smothered in my heart, with so much success together, that upon a secret consultation with my own wishes, I could not absolutely conclude but I might be yet prevailed upon to change my condition, and make a second venture on the smooth ocean of that state which rendered my life such a blessing in the first. The moment a thought of this nature comes into the breast of an old woman, it clings like Cleopatra's asps, and most commonly stings her to death. For my own part, Sir, though I felt a secret repugnance at the notion of another husband, yet the idea stuck close to my imagination; and I even sometimes endeavoured to persuade myself, that this honest aversion, which in spite of me my conscience would retain, was nothing but a prejudice of education or custom, which it was highly meritorious to subdue. My memory was ransacked for instances where women in my circumstances had married a second time, with handsome young fellows too, yet lived extremely happy, notwithstanding the vulgar and abominable supposition that nobody could entertain a passion for a woman in years: nay, Mr. Babler, I found texts of Scripture in support of my favourite opinion, and absolutely forced myself to believe that I was obliged, by the very principles of religion, to make another choice.

While I was thus debating, Sir, my son Edward, who is a colonel in the army, brought a young fellow of his acquaintance to sup at my house. I do not know how it was, but I fancied he was the most handsome man I had ever

ever seen in my life; his conversation, too, was so elegant, and he paid so profound a deference to my opinion, that I did not sleep—shame upon my antiquated eyelids—a single wink the whole night. What need I trespass on your patience—Major Ravage repeated his visits, began to find he was far from disagreeable, and, in short, made an offer of his hand in such terms as I was wholly unable to resist. Without ever enquiring into his character, or his circumstances, I consented to be his at an age that would become me to wait upon my grand-children, and flattered myself that his affection might be engaged to my person, at the very moment I knew it to be entirely created by my purse. My poor first husband imagining that, as I had been a faithful wife to him, I should be a tender mother to his children, left me in possession of fifty thousand pounds, and a jointure of three thousand a year; every sixpence of which, as far as I could, I nevertheless unnaturally settled on the villain, who had taken the advantage of my second childhood, the morning after the celebration of our nuptials.

My children, you may be sure, would be justly offended at this preposterous match, and they were; but, to be rid of upbraiding, which cut me to the soul, I quarrelled with them in turn, and forbade them ever to enter into my sight; but, alas! I had too soon an occasion for their assistance and relief. A fortnight had scarcely passed, when Major Ravage, without saying a single syllable, set off for Bath with a tradesman's wife

in the city; and about an hour after his departure, an upholsterer came in, demanding the possession of my house and goods, having bought every thing that morning from my husband. I will not attempt to paint my astonishment, my fury, and my distress; it was too much for nature to support, and I fell lifeless on the floor. Not to tire your patience, Sir, upon examining into every thing, and sending to the major, he flatly refused either to send me a shilling, or ever to cohabit again with so stale a parcel of mortality—that was his decent expression. In this situation, my eldest daughter came and conducted me to her house, generously soothing me in the tenderest manner; but wounding me, however, a thousand times more by her goodness, than she could possibly do by seizing the opportunity to load me with complaints. I am now going to sue for a separate maintenance; and shall convince the grey-headed sucklings of my sex, that an old woman who marries a young fellow, if she even should meet with a worthy one, can never expect to be treated with any tenderness or regard; and that, on the other hand, if she consents to wed a villain, she can look for nothing but an endless scene of poverty and contempt: where she is most fortunate in her choice, neglect and ridicule must be her portion; and where she happens to be otherwise, the public scorn of the world will be aggravated by a continual round of private wretchedness and distress.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

LAVINIA RAVAGE.

N^o. XLI. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

SEEING a variety of letters in your entertaining paper from husbands and wives, I have taken the liberty of adding to the number of your matrimonial correspondents, and doubt not, if you favour my complaint with a place, but that it will be attended with very salutary effects.

You must know, Sir, I am married to one of the most agreeable women in

England, have an unabating passion for my wife, and every reason to imagine her sentiments are equally tender for me: there is nothing of consequence but what we continually study to oblige each other in; yet, at the same time, there are a thousand little trifles in which we are always sure to disagree, and which are not only an endless source of disquiet to ourselves, but of uneasiness to our whole family.

Last night, for instance, Sir, after supper, I acquainted Nancy that a vintner,

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E. F. Burney del.

Heath sculpt.

Plate II.

Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & C° Oct^r 28, 1786.

ner, who owed me a hundred pounds for some Lisbon, (for, you must know, I am a wine merchant, Mr. Babler) had failed, and that there was but little probability of expecting two and six-pence from the sale of all his effects. I furthermore informed her, that I was much to blame in the affair, and that I had trusted this man contrary to the advice of an intimate friend, who was perfectly conversant with his circumstances. My wife, instead of reprehending me for indiscretion, as the generality of her sex would have done in the same case, made use of every argument in her power to dissipate my chagrin; told me, the most careful were unable now and then to avoid an error, and bid me console myself under my loss, by thanking Providence that I had not been a sufferer in double the sum. I was greatly charmed with this disposition in Mrs. Mountain, Sir, and expressed my sensibility of it in a manner with which she seemed infinitely pleased. Well, after all this, would you imagine, Mr. Babler, that a most trivial circumstance should make us part beds for that night! My favourite liquor is a glass of punch, and it happens to be my wife's too: making a little as we were alone, I unluckily squeezed the pulp of the lemon into the bowl; upon which she immediately exclaimed, with some warmth—‘ Lord, my dear, you have spoiled the punch!—‘ No, my love,’ replied I, ‘ the pulp gives it a fine flavour; and besides, you know I am very fond of it.’—‘ Ay, but,’ says she, ‘ you are sensible I can't abide it.’—‘ Then, my dear,’ returned I, ‘ it is an easy matter to avoid putting any in your glass.’—‘ Lord! Mr. Mountain, I have spoke to you a thousand times about this very circumstance; I believe, in my conscience, you do it on purpose to give me disgust.’

Here, Mr. Babler, we began a contest; severity produced severity, till at last I ordered a bed to be made for myself; and poor Nancy retired to her own, with her eyes swimming in tears.

For the whole night, neither of us (for I judge of her by myself) had a single wink of sleep; we tumbled and tossed, canvassed the matter fifty ways in our minds; and at last concluded, like Lockit and Peachum in the Beggar's

Opera, that we were both in the wrong. Yet, notwithstanding all this, when we met at breakfast, but an hour ago, neither of us would condescend to speak first; we affected a resentment of countenance that was utterly foreign to our hearts, and endeavoured to keep up the appearance of an unremitting anger, when we both of us longed to be reconciled, and had the most passionate inclination to be pleased. Breakfast was over before we exchanged a syllable. When the servant had left the room, I prepared to go out, and had just got to the parlour-door, when poor Nancy, unable to hold it out any longer, cried, in a tone of irresistible softness—‘ And will you go without speaking a word?’ Here our whole ridiculous quarrel was at an end: I turned to her with all the fondness I could possibly assume, and held her in my arms for some moments; while she, returning the fervor of the embrace, burst into a flood of tears.

It is inconceivable to think, Mr. Babler, how contemptible these little differences have made us in the eyes of our own servants. Whenever they see us cool towards one another, they titter and laugh, and say the poor things will soon kiss and make it up again. It was no longer ago than last week that I overheard my rascal of a coachman tell one of his fellow-servants, that his master and mistress were nothing better than an overgrown boy and girl, and that he fancied a little of his horse-whip would be of great service to both of them. It is very odd, Mr. Babler, that people who really love one another, and are not wholly destitute of understanding, should give way to such resentment in the merest trifles, who, in the most important circumstances of life, are above feeling the smallest resentment, or entertaining the minutest disesteem. Many is the time, Sir, I have found fault with my wife for stirring the fire, when her spending five hundred pounds has not given me the least uneasiness; and many a time has she fallen out with me, if, in cutting up a fowl, I happened to splash ever so small a drop of gravy on the table-cloth, though she has felt no discomposure in life, if I spoiled a rich silk, or dirtied a fine head-dress. This morning, however, we have agreed, as a means of keeping ourselves from passions of this nature

nature for the future, to send you the foregoing account; and if it should turn out any way serviceable to others, as I hope it will, I shall have a double rea-

son to sign myself, your most humble servant,

ROBERT MOUNTAIN.

Nº XLII. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26.

THREE is a very sensible saying among the women, when any of their acquaintance happen to be brought to-bed of a boy; and this is, That Mrs. Such-a-one has got one of the right sort. In reality, there are so many dangers attending the education of a young lady to years of maturity, and there are such a variety of circumstances to destroy her reputation, which, through the fashionable depravity of the times, are considered as so many excellencies in the other sex, that I am no way surprized to find people particularly rejoiced at having 'one of the right sort,' as it is emphatically expressed; since the satisfaction of the parent is considerably less exposed, as well as the happiness of the child; to say nothing of the infinitely greater ease with which the infant can be brought up.

When I seriously consider the customary mode of educating the fair-sex, instead of being surprized to find so many turn out an affliction to their friends, or a disgrace to society, I am in fact astonished that we do not find a multitude more. Now a-days, instead of being attentive to the cultivation of a young lady's mind, our regard is entirely engrossed by the accomplishments of her person; and the generality of our mothers are totally unconcerned whether or no their daughters are acquainted with the most necessary duties of religion, provided they can make a tolerable figure at a party of whist, and turn out their toes.

From the first moment little Miss is sent to school, she is provided with a doll, perhaps as large again as herself; and is instructed in the necessary manner of dressing it properly, and sending it quietly to bed. Thus, in the earliest stage, her mind receives a turn for gallantry and dress, which imperceptibly strengthens with her years; and being accustomed to nothing but compliments on her beauty, she becomes utterly indifferent to every thing else: the little

reading she is mistress of is rather a prejudice than a benefit; for as it is principally composed of novels, it constantly warms her imagination with sentiments of intrigue, and adds to the opinion which she entertained of her own person and understanding. Hence she fancies herself the heroine of every extravagant romance; till at last, from an admiration of the character, she really takes it up, and runs off, if in high life, with some Amadis of a subaltern officer; and, if in low, with a strolling player, or a barber's boy.

The scandalous neglect of female education may, however, be put down to the account of the other sex. By a custom, no less arbitrary than unreasonable, we cut them off from a liberal instruction; yet, at the very time that we lay a manacle on their understandings, affect to despise them for fools: as if they were beings totally opposite by nature to ourselves, we fancy that the same enlargement of mind, which is so absolutely necessary for us, is utterly improper for them; and suppose that, the better capable they are of acting in life, the worse they must behave of course. Such are the sentiments entertained by the high and mighty lords of the creation, relative to the education of the ladies. What wonder, therefore, or what pity is it, that we are so frequently unhappy in our daughters and our wives! Are we not in fact answerable for every error resulting from their ignorance, since that ignorance is principally occasioned by ourselves? And should we not, consequently, instead of throwing the whole blame at their doors, remove it entirely to our own?

I shall conclude this paper with a few memorandum, written by an excellent young lady, lately deceased, who was brought up in a very different manner from the generality of her sex. They were communicated to me yesterday by her father, with tears in his eyes, and shall

shall stand as a lasting monument of so deserving a daughter's virtue and understanding.

Mem. Being now eighteen years of age, and hastening to that period of life in which I am to prove my gratitude to the best of parents, let me always make it a rule to prefer the gratification of their wishes to the enjoyment of my own.

Mem. A parent is entitled to the first place in every child's esteem; and she that can be deficient in a point of duty here, ought justly to be suspected of infidelity in the discharge of every other.

Mem. By all means to be strictly attentive in the worship of my Creator, as I can never expect a future blessing, without shewing a becoming gratitude for a past.

Mem. Always to believe a man has the basest designs, who wants me to conceal his addresses from my father.

Mem. Never to hear the protestations of any man who has behaved dishonorably to another woman.

Mem. In all companies to treat those with the greatest share of deference, who are most unhappy in their persons or their circumstances.

Mem. Whoever calls me goddefs, angel, or any other ridiculous appella-

tion, though never so fashionable—a fool.

Mem. Miss Polly Beaufort extremely uneasy at seeing Mr. Beverley speaking to me in the drawing-room last Sunday evening;—to avoid conversing with that gentleman as much as possible for the future.

Poor Mrs. Johnson, the shoemaker's widow, and three children, in the greatest distress. *Mem.* To allow them a guinea a week till a happy alteration in their circumstances, and to save this article out of unnecessary expences in house-keeping and cloaths.

Sir John Blandford, a man of much merit, who I fear has some sentiments in my favour, I must avoid with the nicest circumspection: for as I cannot return his esteem, it would be infamous to mislead him with chimerical notions; and inhuman to treat him with derision or disrepect.

Mem. To send the hackney-coachman's wife as much as my papa got the fellow fined in, for behaving insolently last Tuesday, when we were suddenly caught in a shower, and coming from the Park.

Mem. Mr. Winworth, a most deserving and accomplished gentleman; to think no more of him, (if I can help it) unless he should be mentioned by my papa.

N° XLIII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3.

NEXT to an invariable rectitude of conduct, there is no light in which the character of a man can possibly appear so amiable as in a hearty concern for his errors, especially those which are more the consequence of human infirmity than the effect of a mean premeditation. In proportion to the repentance or atonement, we are apt to raise him in our esteem; and it is not the least part of his merit, that libertines themselves are lost in an admiration of his behaviour, however slow, through a ridiculous fear of public contempt, they may be to imitate an action which they cannot, in spite of fashion or education, forbear to love.

My nephew, Harry Rattle, called upon me this morning; and after the usual 'How do you do' of the day, pull-

ed out a letter from the identical Mr. Bumper, whom in a former paper I mentioned as having sent Harry a challenge for refusing to drink a strumpet he had toasted one night after supper at his own house. Mr. Bumper is a young man of nine and twenty, who has received a liberal education; is in possession of twelve hundred pounds a year; and though he has launched pretty freely into the customary excesses of the times, has been dissolute rather from fashion than inclination. For a few weeks past he has been at a tenant's in Berkshire, from whence, two days ago, he sent the following letter to Harry, with permission to communicate it, through my means, to the notice of the public.

TO HARRY RATTLE, ESQ.

DEAR HARRY,

IN my last letter I told you how deeply I was struck with the person of Sally Poplar, my tenant's daughter, and expressed an intention of setting out immediately for London, for fear I should succeed in any design prejudicial to her innocence and virtue. Yet, notwithstanding I was perfectly convinced how necessary a step of that nature would be, I could not work myself up to a sufficient resolution of quitting the place. I flattered myself I should be able to resist every temptation, yet indulge myself a few days longer under the same roof with the bewitching rustic; and though I knew it would be impossible to possess this happiness without saying some tender things to her, I nevertheless thought I could avoid carrying matters to any critical length, by a criminal importunity. From my example, however, the unthinking part of our acquaintance may be instructed, that it is infinitely wiser to fly from a temptation than to combat with an opportunity. The moment a man is alone with a woman he admires, and from whom he has received some indications of reciprocal esteem, human nature must not be human nature if he does not endeavour to improve so fair an occasion of gratifying his wishes: he may fancy he will go to such and such lengths, and no further; but passion will hurry him, imperceptibly, from liberty to liberty, and he will find it utterly impossible to retain the least consideration for the unhappy girl, when he has totally lost all consideration for himself.

Such was my case the night before last: Sally and I lay on the same floor, and she had promised to let me chat half an hour with her before she went to bed. This half hour was productive of another and another; till at last, the poor girl was worked up to such a pitch of tenderness, that she could refuse nothing; and then it was I found, in spite of all my humanity, that there was no possibility of getting off. It would have been very strange, after pressing three hours for the last favour, which all the time I was in hopes would have been refused, if I had withdrawn the moment it was granted: the consequence therefore was, that af-

ter I had been rascal enough to deprive her of her reason, I was villain enough to seize the opportunity which that suspension gave me—

And for a moment's guilt, destroyed
A life of spotless fame.

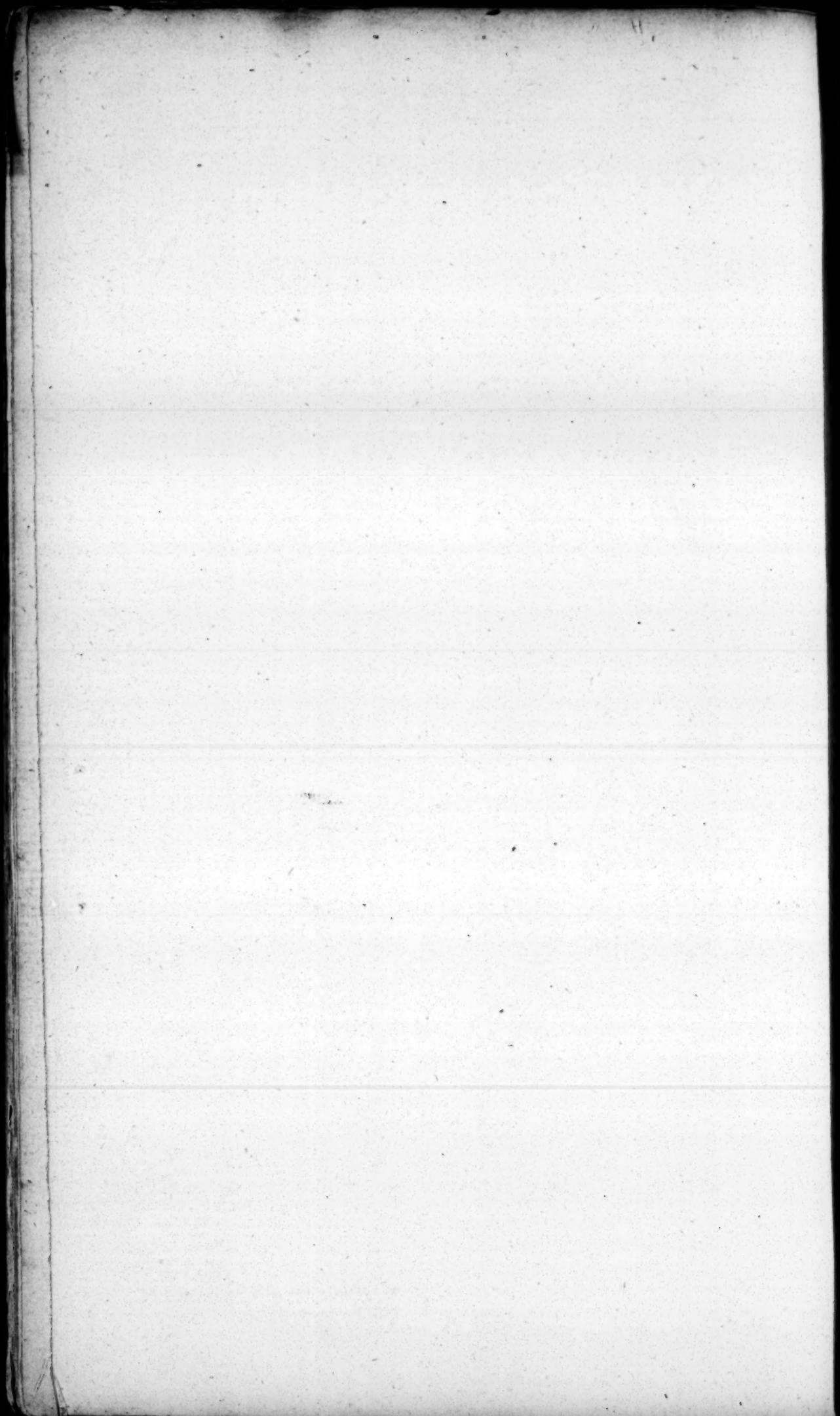
We had scarcely fallen asleep, (do not laugh, Rattle, we slept, upon my soul) but old Mrs. Poplar having, as she imagined, forgot to see that the kitchen-fire was out, (a piece of care which she never omitted) came down stairs, and passing by Sally's door, which in the confusion of affairs we had neglected to lock, turned the bolt and came in. I need not attempt to paint her astonishment, nor, upon being waked, our own surprize. Sally shrieked, and hid herself beneath the clothes; Mrs. Poplar wrung her hands in a fit of unutterable distraction, and desired her husband to come instantly down. The good man, terrified out of his wits for fear his desk had been broke open, or his house set on flames, made what haste he could; but never was distress or consternation so great, as when he found out the real situation of affairs, and beheld the destruction of his only child: for a moment he was petrified; till at last, recovering the use of his recollection, he cast a look at me that cut me to the very soul, and crying 'O Sir!' burst into a violent flood of tears. In my life I never was so much affected; I felt myself truly despicable, and was at once torn with shame and remorse. To a man not utterly destitute of humanity and reflection, Harry, no circumstances could be so mortifying: instead of gratitude for the cordial welcome which I had received in the house of my friend, I had violated the hospitality of his roof, and robbed the darling of his age of what ought to be infinitely dearer than her life. The girl I doated on to death seemed absorbed in distraction; and her worthy parents were almost lost in despair. What could I do, Harry? The torture of the damned was an Elysium to what I suffered; and, without reparation, of what service was it to repent? Thus situated, I begged Mr. Poplar and his wife to withdraw till I was dressed, and then I would endeavour to satisfy them: they did so, and went down to the parlour. I followed them in a few minutes; and summoning all the fortitude I could, deli-



J. G. Bony del.

J. Walker sculps.

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vered myself to the following purport—
 ‘ I will not, my good Mr. and Mrs. Poplar, go about to excuse the transactions of to-night, but own myself a very dirty scoundrel; however, as there is no possibility of recalling what is past, I shall readily make all the atonement in my power, and if I have your consent, will marry Sally to-morrow morning.’ The transport of the worthy old couple was now as violent as their sorrow had been but a moment before. Mr. Poplar looked at me for some time with a fixed attention, then broke into an excessive laugh, which possibly might have proved fatal, had he not thrown himself into his great chair, and found a seasonable relief in a flood of tears.

Well, Harry, what say you to my behaviour? I have been married a week,

and am convinced that virtue is its own reward; for, in my days, I never tasted felicity till now: every eye beams on me with gratitude and esteem; and when I enter into an examination of my own heart, all is approbation and joy. I am satisfied of your concurrence, my dear Harry; and as for fools and rascals, their opinion is what a man of speculation must both despise and detest. It is not for the satisfaction of others we are to live, but our own; therefore those actions which secure that satisfaction, since it must always be founded on a rectitude of principle, are the best tests both of the goodness of our hearts, and the soundness of our understandings. Yours, most affectionately,

RICHARD BUMPER.

Nº XLIV. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10.

IT was an admirable reply which Socrates once made to an impudent coxcomb, who demanded what he would do if there was no other world after this. I need not inform the intelligent reader that this celebrated philosopher was as eminent for the rectitude of his life, as the greatness of his understanding; and that, upon all occasions, he maintained the certainty of a future state, where every man was to be rewarded according to his deserts—
 ‘ What shall I do,’ returned Socrates, ‘ if there is not another world after this? Why, at any rate, I shall be as well off as you are—But what will you do if there is?’

It is really surprising, that the force of this excellent answer is not always present to the minds of those people who either take upon them absolutely to deny the existence of another world, or act in such a manner as if they looked upon a belief of it to be utterly ridiculous and absurd. Common policy, one would imagine, should incline them to a uniform rectitude of life, if they were not actuated by real goodness; and inspire, if totally insensible of gratitude to the great Author of their being, something like a reasonable concern for themselves.

When we consider, though ever so slightly, on the nature of man, and re-

flect on the important something which is continually deciding upon every action in the human bosom, we can scarcely think it possible that there is one man in the whole circuit of creation who is dead to the belief of a future state, or is really of opinion that there is no such being as a God. His own heart must be an evidence against him; and he must feel the certainty of another existence, though he may be apt to cry out with Cato—‘ When, or where?’

But, however, if there is even a possibility to suppose such a class of creatures as Atheists in being, yet every day’s experience will point out millions to our view whose situation is infinitely more terrible, and who are more entitled to the abhorrence of the world, as well as more exposed to the vengeance of their God. A disordered mind, or a weak understanding, may be advanced as some little mitigation of the wretch’s infidelity who denies the existence of his Creator; but what excuse can he have who acknowledges the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Deity, yet lives as if he believed there was no Deity at all? What plea can be urged for those who, while they confess themselves indebted for every blessing to the unbounded beneficence of the Supreme Being, act in one constant round of disobedience to his will;

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and trample, while they own the necessity of an implicit obedience to his ordinances, in the most infamous manner, upon the greatest of his laws?

The Atheist, if we suppose any rational creature can be an Atheist, lives consistent with himself; he looks upon this world as the final stage of his existence, and consequently has no occasion to act like those who are in a positive expectation of future punishments and rewards. Hence he is justified in making the most of the present world, and has a kind of title to follow every pursuit that has a tendency to promote his interest, or gratify his inclinations, without any regard to the means.

But surely the man who kneels down reverently at the throne of the Divine Being, pours out his soul in thankfulness for past blessings, or in solicitations for future benefits, is to the last degree inexcusable as well as inconsistent, when he runs from the immediate temple and presence of his God to some licentious scene of immorality, the participation of some criminal enjoyment, or the prosecution of some infamous pursuit. Yet, alas! what numbers have we, who, after endeavouring to obtain a reconciliation with the Father of Mercies, fly, while the awful benediction of the church is quite fresh and warm upon their heads, and plunge into all the vices which but the very moment before they were supplicating the goodness of Omnipotence to obliterate and forgive?

It is to me astonishing, what men, who believe the certainty of a Divine Being, can think of themselves, or what idea they can entertain of their God. One moment, they are all devotion and penitence; the next, we find them steep-

ed in the most glaring contradictions and crimes: one moment they are imploring the King of heaven and earth with a rapture of gratitude and reverence; yet the very next, as if all their supplications were so many absolute designs of turning him into ridicule or contempt, they circulate an audacious laugh at his institutions, and make a daring mockery of his laws. Nay, more, they frequently go into his very temple as if they wanted to aggravate the unparalleled impiety of their conduct; and there, in the very place immediately dedicated to his service, they prosecute the most shameless violation of his commands: there they very frequently go, under the sacred mask of religion and virtue, to seduce unsuspecting innocence to shame; to lodge scorpions in the breast of some unhappy father, and drench a mother's pillow in misery and tears.

Let me calmly ask the believers of a future state, if absolute Atheism is a crime more unpardonable than this? Of what service is our expectation of another life, if we only employ our knowledge to have that life marked out to everlasting torments and despair? Of what advantage is our religion, if we act in such a manner as to make that religion at once our condemnation and disgrace? Or of what utility is our acknowledgment of a God, if the acknowledgment of such a being must harrow up the soul, and goad it with unutterable stings? Atheism is almost a refuge in such a case; and it is much more consistent to cry out with the most abandoned profligate our imagination can form, that there is no existence after this, than exclaim, in the language of the divine Socrates—‘ What shall we do if there is?’

Nº XLV. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17.

THREE is a certain mode of behaviour in the world which is entirely founded upon Self, and proceeds from nothing but a passionate desire of gratifying our own inclinations; yet which, upon all occasions, lays claim to the title of unbounded benevolence and generosity, and puts in for the universal admiration, in numberless instances, where

it ought to meet with nothing but the universal contempt. A letter, however, which I lately received from a lady who signs herself ‘ A miserable Woman of Quality,’ will elucidate this matter, perhaps, better than the most elaborate discussion which I could possibly enter into; and therefore I shall make no apology for laying it before my readers.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

AS you seem good-naturedly ready to pay a greater regard to the circumstances than the compliments of your correspondents, I shall begin with as little ceremony as I intend taking leave, and neither trespass on your leisure with a fulsome encomium, nor an unnecessary excuse.

You must know, Sir, I am the daughter of a private gentleman in Oxfordshire, who had a large family to provide for upon a very moderate estate. There were six of us, and but three hundred a year to answer all contingencies. Happily, indeed, I was the only girl amongst them; so that with a little interest, as my father was generally beloved, four of my brothers were fortunate enough to be preferred in the navy, the army, and public offices: the eldest and myself were the only remaining children at home; and my poor papa, whose favourites we particularly seemed to be, resolved to compensate, by an unwearied attention to our education, for the apparent narrowness of our fortunes. As for me, before I was fifteen, besides all the customary needleworks peculiar to my sex, I spoke French and Italian pretty tolerably, danced an easy minuet enough; sung an agreeable little song, and played a lesson at sight on my harpsichord. What was, however, infinitely more essential, though now seldom considered as any part of a young woman's education, I could never sleep without saying my prayers; and at church was no way ashamed at repeating the Ten Commandments, or raising a psalm with the rest of the congregation. My person was not in the least tortured into any fashionable form by strait lacing; and as for my face, it was rather more wholesome than lovely; and not so much distinguished by any surprising delicacy of complexion, as by a certain air of complacency and cheerfulness, which I flatter myself bespeak neither a corrupt heart, nor a total want of understanding.

Excuse me, Mr. Babler, for being thus tediously, and perhaps vainly circumstantial, about either my acquired or personal qualifications; but as they were the only causes of my great, I must not say my good fortune, I thought there might be some necessity for more than a cursory description of both.

Between the age of fifteen and twenty,

such as my little attractions were, they procured me no inconsiderable share of admirers, and I had more than one opportunity of marrying very advantageously: no person, however, engaging my inclination, my father never offered to press me on the subject, but always tenderly declared his poor girl should chuse for herself in a case where she was the most principally interested. When I was just turned of twenty, an occasion for such a choice occurred; and he readily consented to the solicitations of a young gentleman, who had been left an estate of eight hundred a year, in our neighbourhood, by the will of a relation at that time about six months deceased.

But, alas! Sir, see the uncertainty of all human expectations: three or four days before the intended solemnization of our nuptials, a certain noble earl, of an immense fortune, had his carriage accidentally broke down within a few yards of my father's. Mr. Bilson my lover, and I, were looking out of the window at that instant, and immediately ran out to offer the civilities of the house to his lordship, who frankly accepted the invitation, and staid there the whole night. My father made every thing as agreeable as could be to his illustrious guest; and was not a little surprized the next morning, when the nobleman told him I had made an impression on his heart, and offered a settlement so very large, that my poor papa, dazzled with that, and the desire of seeing his favourite Nancy a countess, immediately forgot all his former resolutions to allow me a liberty of chusing for myself, and declared his lordship should be put in possession of my hand whenever he thought proper to mention a day for that purpose. Why need I trespass on your patience, Mr. Babler, to paint either my own distraction, or the frantic behaviour of Mr. Bilson? Suffice it, Sir, that in a week after I was dragged half dead to the altar, and torn from the only man I ever could love, to be wedded to one whom I never can.

The subject of my complaint, Sir, now comes to be mentioned. I have been married three years, and endeavoured to make the most of my wretched circumstances by compensating with the strictest discharge of my duty for an apparent want of love. This is not sufficient for his lordship: mortified that he can engage no return of his affection,

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he is perpetually reproaching me with a want of gratitude; and always telling me of his prodigious condescension in raising me to the rank of a countess, from the former obscurity of my situation. Thus, Sir, he thinks I am obliged to him for making me miserable; and imagines I ought to study nothing but the continual repose of his bosom, because he has generously planted everlasting daggers in mine. There are many women, Mr. Babler, alike unhappily circumstanced; it would therefore be kind if you desired our disinterested

husbands to remember for whose sake they have thus graciously honoured us with their names; and to consider, it was not out of any regard for the promotion of our wishes, but through a mean, and very often an illiberal, desire of gratifying their own. Your paper is left at our house once a week; and if you will insert this, my lord will perhaps be convinced he is more entitled to my aversion than my esteem, and be fully satisfied he has made me

A MISERABLE WOMAN OF
QUALITY.

N^o XLVI. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24.

THERE are few professions so critically situated, I believe, as that of an author. The generality of the world are always disposed to turn his productions into ridicule, and the principal number of the remaining part but too much inclined to treat his person with contempt: the first are offended that any body should presume to be wiser than themselves; and the latter look upon it as something very clever to treat a man of superior abilities with disrespect: the contracted circle in which it is his fortune to be esteemed, is most commonly made up of those who either are not adequate judges of his merit, or in no condition to reward it, if they are. Thus (as few gentlemen of the quill are ever possessed of any extraordinary fortunes) they are in a manner set apart to combat with indigence and obscurity; and their genius being naturally depressed by the melancholy state of their circumstances, they become in a little time incapable of reflecting any honour on their country, or of acquiring any comfortable dependence for themselves. The reader, by perusing the following letter, will easily see why I have been induced to take up the pen upon this head.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

AT a little snug retirement in Derbyshire I am always favoured with your paper once a week; and as I think it no less instructive than entertaining, I heartily wish, for the benefit of the world, that all our authors were as easy in their minds, as, from the apparent facility of his productions, I conclude the agree-

able writer of the Babler. If I may deliver my sentiments, I am really of opinion, that the decline of literature arises more from a want of encouragement than a want of genius in the kingdom; and though I shall not presume to rank myself among men of real abilities, yet I believe the principal part of those who can, have more than once experienced some of the mortifications which I am about to relate, and found them not a little prejudicial to that force of imagination so indispensably requisite for a writer of any character.

You must know, Mr. Babler, I was sent very early to the university, in order to get myself qualified for a living; which a certain nobleman had in his gift, and which he repeatedly assured my father should be at my service on the death of the incumbent, if it was thought worth while on that account to educate me for the church. Unfortunately, however, before I was at Oxford three years, his lordship, who had sat up all night, was taken off by an unexpected accident; for mounting a strange hunter the next morning, at a gentleman's seat where he was then upon a visit, he pursued the game with too incautious a resolution, and broke his neck in taking a five-barred gate. With him perished my expectations; and I was taken from the college directly.

During my stay at the university, I made several little essays in the various walks of literature, merely for my amusement; which were so favourably received by those exalted geniuses the compilers of magazines, that they generally honoured them with the appellation of elegant, and requested the continua-

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tion of my correspondence. This gave me a strong propensity to writing; and as I looked upon an author to be the greatest of all sublunary characters, I was ambitious of gaining so honourable a title; and, through this unaccountable infatuation, neglected every necessary means of promoting my future interest and fortune. It is true, my father bound me to an eminent attorney; but alas, Sir, Homer and Virgil were consulted infinitely more than either Littleton or Coke; and instead of Replies, Rejoinders, or Demurrers, I was in the midst of term engaged in writing some poetical whimsies of my own, or in commenting on those of other people. The little all that came to me on my father's decease was soon expended, and I found myself in an instant left to bustle through an inhospitable world, without either money, business, or bread. In this dilemma, necessity obliged me to have recourse to the booksellers: I was accordingly enlisted into the army of literary mercenaries; and, like the humblest class of soldiers, obliged, for the most pitiful pittance, to run a frequent risque of my reputation, and sometimes a dangerous hazard of my life. Fame, indeed, came in tolerably fast; but still I ran deeper and deeper into debt: I was totally unacquainted with the customs of the trade, and the booksellers having me in their power, conscientiously treated me as they pleased. I was confined to my regular hours of work as if I was a shoemaker or a taylor, and very often ordered to do a particular quantity in a particular time. Sometimes, Sir, I have been obliged to write a philosophical essay on Contentment, when my heart was bursting with anguish; and at others, ordered to produce a poem on Liberty, while the bailiffs were waiting at the door. But the severest mortification of all, was the impertinent freedom with which I was treated by every ragamuffin of the press: the printer would criticise on my performances to my face, and the very devils themselves would talk to me of mistakes, and propose what they were modestly pleased to consider as amendments; nay, sometimes they have invited me to club for a pot of porter, or asked me to take a game at all-fours at the Goose and Gridiron. For fourteen years, Mr. Babler, did I continue this comfortable life; when last winter but one, having written a political treatise which occasioned

some noise, a nobleman of great eminence kindly enquired for the author, found me out, generously paid my debts, and assigned me an apartment in his own house. I now thought myself made for ever; but I had scarcely been a month in the house, when my lord's admiration of my abilities began to abate a little: he expected, as an author, that I should support every absurdity he advanced in an argument; and, as a man of genius, that I should always be comical. With this view, he introduced me into all companies; but when he saw I would neither be his parasite nor his buffoon, his friendship very visibly declined: at table I was insulted with the proposal of a wager whenever I presumed to dissent in opinion; and then it was instantly recollected, with a loud laugh, that authors were but seldom overburdened with money. In the largest circle of his acquaintance, my lord, by an affected compliment of condolence, would paint out my former distress, and then insinuate the merit of his own generosity in relieving it: at other times, he used me with an intolerable insolence of superiority, and then affected to be displeased when he put me out of countenance; in short, I almost determined to go back to my old profession again, as thinking it better to suffer a secret affront than to be thus publicly contemptible. I was soon settled in my resolution, for the dining-room jests on my profession and circumstances began to be bandied about in the kitchen; and the butler, under a pretended air of simplicity and ignorance, came one day up to my apartment, and begged me to raise the devil, that he might enquire after one or two of his silver spoons. Providence, however, took pity on me at last: a worthy gentleman, whose memory I shall ever revere, that had seen me two or three times at my lord's table, thought of me so kindly as to set me down a hundred a year for life in his will, and as he was very old and infirm, scarcely survived his generous donation ten days. I heard of it but the very morning I took my leave of his lordship; and though I dropped a tear to the memory of my benefactor, I could not help rejoicing at so fortunate an alteration in my circumstances. I have now lived a twelvemonth in Derbyshire, quite happy in myself, and respected by every body; and have sent you this letter to point

point out the real cause of that decline in literature, which has of late years been so universally complained of in this kingdom. My story requires no animadversion, as every man of sense must exclaim with the poet—

Alas, what chance have authors to be read ?
Whose daily writings earn their daily bread !

I am, Mr. Babler, yours, &c.

CRITO.

Nº XLVII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

IT was a very wise saying of an old philosopher, that happiness was infinitely sweeter in the expectation than in the possession, since the generality of mankind are rather apt to over-value what they have not, and to set too small an estimation upon what they actually have. I remember, Sir, about thirty years ago, when my circumstances were a little contracted, I fancied no man could be miserable who was master of a great estate : it is inconceivable how I used to lie in bed of a morning, building castles in the air, and chalking out future plans of generosity and magnificence, if my stars should ever kindly indulge me with this *ne plus ultra* of human felicity ! I have been a member of parliament; have drawn up an impeachment against Sir Robert; harangued the House like a cherubim; received gold boxes from every corporation in the kingdom; refused a peerage; and married a woman of exquisite beauty and immense fortune, in the space of half an hour—when, O dreadful catastrophe ! all these golden fantasies have been in an instant swept from my imaginations, by the milk-woman's yell at the door, the falling of the tongs, or the accidental jump of our old black cat.

Yet, Sir, though my finances were moderate enough at the time I am speaking of, still I found more satisfaction in indulging those imaginary objects of felicity than ever I experienced since. I came, by the death of a very distant relation, to the possession of two thousand pounds a year. I flatter myself, I am no more of the miser than the generality of my neighbours; and, if I know my own heart, it is as likely to feel for the distresses of the unfortunate, and as willing to relieve them, as some whom I know to pique themselves mightily on the humanity of their tempers. But this is not the point—my fortune has, I may

almost say, unhinged the system upon which I formerly built my happiness, and the actual possession cuts off every pleasure which originally resulted from a chimerical expectation.

This you will probably look upon as a very extraordinary circumstance; but it is nevertheless literally true: instead of being able to reap any great pleasure from an estate, I find it productive of nothing but uneasiness and anxiety; my wants are very limited, and soon gratified; and the very superflux of fortune, which to any other man might possibly be a matter of the highest satisfaction, is to me a constant source of vexation and regret. In the first place, I have no child to enjoy my possessions after I am gone, and I am nothing more than amassing for people who envy me when living, and will in all likelihood despise me when dead. The very man to whom I leave my estate, will, perhaps, be the first to damn the old curmudgeon for not tipping off half a dozen of years sooner; and those for whom I am continually doing a great deal, the readiest to execrate my memory, because I have not done a great deal more.

But though a sensibility of this nature might in some measure render me regardless to the care of my affairs, I look upon it as an indispensable part of my duty to prevent, as much as possible, the least disadvantage from my negligence and inattention; and am less fearful of the *probable* contempt I *may* meet from my relations, than the *certain* ridicule I *must* suffer from my tenants and dependants, was I to wink at a continual plunder of my property, and to permit them indiscriminately to grow opulent at my expence. Thus, any way, Sir, whether I exert a commendable prudence, or throw it entirely aside, this unfortunate estate 'clings like a detested sin 'to my remembrance,' and poisons every comfort which I once was weak enough to imagine it would have produced.

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If it rains for any time, I am fearful my corn will be washed away; if the weather is uncommonly fine, I am apprehensive of it's being parched up; if it freezes with severity, alas! for my poor flower-garden; if the wind happens to be high, my apple-trees are destroyed; and if it snows, I am in an absolute ague about my little lambs, and eternally scolding John and Thomas for not taking sufficient care to preserve them from the inclemency of the weather. Thus again, in whatever manner the wisdom of the Deity thinks proper to direct the seasons, I am sure to shew an impious dissatisfaction at his decrees; and, to use the emphatical words of Mr. Pope, with a little alteration—

Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Rejudge his laws, and am the God of God.

From my situation, Mr. Babler, let those in the lower classes of life, who murmur at the dispensations of Providence, and think it uncommonly hard to toil for a precarious subsistence, while their neighbours are rolling it away in coaches and six, learn to consider that it is not the dignity of rank, or the affluence of fortune, which is the source of real felicity, but a man's own mind; let them learn to consider, that this very rank, and this very opulence for which they continually languish, are very often the causes of the most severe affliction; and that the swelling dome of courtly magnificence undergoes many a storm, which the humility of the villager's situation keeps from breaking on his little shed. — I am your's, &c.

INFELIX.

Nº XLVIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 7.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THE good-natured readiness with which I see you insert a variety of letters upon domestic occurrences, has induced me to trouble you with a complaint against my husband, in hopes that his error may be avoided by others at least, though it should fail of the intended reformation in himself.

You must know, Sir, my good man is a shop-keeper near Cripplegate, and as honest a pains-taking young fellow as any of his business; but his notions are rather too elevated for his circumstances; so that neither the strictest industry, nor the most rigid integrity, are likely to carry him prosperously through life, unless I can prevail upon him to change the present frame of his inclination. As the principal part of his acquaintance are tradesmen of eminence, and have their snug little country-houses to retire to of a Sunday, my husband determined to make as genteel a figure as the best of them, and accordingly took a handsome box enough last summer near Stratford. It was in vain that I represented the inconveniences which it would inevitably produce, or mentioned a word about the prodigious expence. I was told that Mr. Refine, the goldsmith, our next door neighbour, was as

little able to afford such a circumstance as ourselves: it was observed, that Sir Richard Steele somewhere said, the surest method of making a good fortune was to carry the appearance of an easy one; and that surely it was very hard, if we could not have a place where we might enjoy a little peace and quietness one day in the week. To crown the whole, my husband, like many other people when they have a favourite point to carry, was resolved to find reasons enough to support not only the propriety but the absolute necessity of his behaviour, and brought one which was unanswerable: he complained his health was considerably impaired by a constant residence in town, and insisted that nothing but a change of air was able to recover it. This silenced me at once; and a house of twenty six pounds a year, with a neat pretty garden behind it, was taken immediately, contiguous to the road-side, for the greater facility of taking the stage-coach, and seeing the various rounds of company that passed by.

As our house has a very reputable appearance without, my husband was resolved that a correspondence should be kept up within; and therefore furnished it very genteelly, laying out no less than three hundred pounds for this purpose. So large a sum expended, as I may say,

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upon an unnecessary account, was not a little inconvenient to a young couple, scarcely four years in trade, and whose capital at first was rather moderate. In fact, Sir, we soon felt it, and were under the disagreeable exigence of borrowing the same sum, at an interest of five per cent. to keep up our business with a proper degree of consequence and punctuality. Well, Sir, every thing being in order at our new habitation, we entered upon it, to enjoy a mouthful of fresh air and a little repose from the fatigues of the week. But see the uncertainty of all human expectations! The fairer the weather, the more we were deprived of the air; for being situated so immediately on the road, we were choaked with a cloud of dust if the window was kept open but a single moment, and had no other prospect but what was furnished by a lifeless stare through an humble pane of glass; if we retired backwards, we lost the variety which company afforded, and stood a chance of being serenaded with the music of half an hundred hogs, which our next door neighbour had constantly breeding in his yard.

This circumstance was very disagreeable; but still a material consolation remained, that of enjoying our Sundays wholly uninterrupted: but here also, Mr. Babler, we were quickly undeceived. The moment we entered, our acquaintance formed parties to dine at our house; and any three or four who were at a loss to kill a Sunday, agreed, without any hesitation, to go and eat a bit of mutton with their friend Will Sheffield, the hardware man. By this means, Sir, instead of retiring to tranquillity and repose, we opened a new scene of bustle and confusion, and kept a house for no other purpose but to bring on an everlasting round of drudgery, and a very heavy expence. Those who know any thing of housekeeping, Mr. Babler, are sensible how small a way a guinea goes in providing a decent entertainment for half a dozen people. I therefore leave you to judge how agreeably I must be situated, when forced to wear a constant appearance of the utmost satisfaction to the very people whom, in my heart, I could have wished in a horse-pond, or scolded out of the house.

Disappointed in all his expectation, Mr. Babler, and the charm of novelty being also worn away, my husband is heartily sick of his villa, yet is both

ashamed and afraid to throw it off his hands; he is fearful his friends will circulate the laugh against him, and is apprehensive his enemies will make use of it to prejudice him in his trade. I have told him over and over, it is better for him to be thought a blockhead than to prove himself one, and much more to his interest to bear a casual reflection on his circumstances, than to be a beggar at once: I have pointed out a variety of tradesmen, whose ruin originally proceeded from the vanity of keeping a country-house, but all to no purpose; for though he acknowledges the justice of my observation, he remains incorrigible; and therefore I have thought it better to print his name in your paper than suffer it to appear in the London Gazette.

We have now three children, Sir; and this cursed country-house, which we have not set a foot in but twice, during the whole winter, runs away with as much as would maintain my whole family. Let me only present you with a curiory estimate:

	£. s. d.
Rent — — —	26 0 0
Taxes, say — —	6 0 0
An additional servant, who is to take care of it, wages, board, and lodging —	30 0 0
Interest for 300l. to furnish it	15 0 0
Accidents and repairs —	2 0 0
Coach-hire backward and for- ward — — —	5 0 0
	<hr/>
	£ 84 0 0

This, Sir, not to say a word of the additional charge of house-keeping, (for there must be meat, drink, and fire, for our apprentice, shopman, and maid in town) visitors, and unavoidable neglect of business, is a considerable sum; and in a course of twenty years, with a little management, and the blessing of Providence, would prove a pretty provision for my poor children. Pray, Sir, print my letter, that London Tradesmen may first get fortunes before they entertain a notion of spending them; and not, for the vanity of occupying a country-house twenty or thirty days in a whole year, throw away what would purchase a handsome independence for their whole lives.

I am, Sir, your most humble servant,
SARAH SHEFFIELD.

N^o XLIX. SATURDAY, JANUARY 14.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I DON'T know a more prevailing error at present among all ranks of people, than an endeavour to disguise their real situation in life, by an appearance totally inconsistent with their character and circumstances. This reflection I am naturally led into by a visit which I paid the other morning to my old friend Sir Timothy Trotter, who has been many years in a declining way with the gout; but who, nevertheless, like another Lord Chalkstone, is all life and spirits in the lucid intervals, as I may say, of his distemper.

When I was shewed up stairs, it did not a little surprize me to see two fellows, dressed like grooms, sitting very familiarly by Sir Timothy's elbow-chair, with jockey-whips in their hands, talking in a careless indolent manner of hot mashes, long stirrups, curry-combs, and curbs: as my old friend had always been remarkable for keeping the best company, I was the more amazed at so odd a couple of visitors. I remember to have dined with him at the square, when there have been half a dozen stars in the room, besides the two archbishops, and three of the foreign ambassadors. However, as it was no busines of mine, I sat down, and in a little time, to my inexpressible astonishment, heard that these two despicable looking things were no less than two noblemen of very great fortune, the Earl of Snaffleworth, and my Lord Donefirst.

Struck as I was at that time, I could not help reflecting, how unworthy a nobleman of Great Britain, a man born to be a legislator in the most generous country of the universe, and honoured with so great a degree of political sanctity, that his bare affirmation was considered as important as an oath, should be dress'd in a dirty pair of boots, greasy leather breeches, a striped flannel waist-coat, a thread-bare drab-coat, and a little round hat like a waterman's. No wonder, thought I, that the French shou look upon us as a nation of paltry-minded people, when we study to appear contemptible; and our very nobility, who ought to glory in keeping up

the consequence of their characters, are ashamed to look like what they are, and sneak from the dignity of titles into the high and mighty quality of grooms.

While I was thus reflecting, the servant came up, and told Sir Thomas, that Dr. Styptic, and Mr. Skirts the taylor, were below stairs; upon which he was ordered, without much compliment, I thought, to the doctor, to send them both up: he did so; and a well-looking man, of about fifty, first entered, dressed in a very handsome suit of full-trimmed black, a large deep-bottomed wig, and every necessary article requisite for the seriousness of the faculty.—Aye, thinks I, this gentleman is perfectly in character; and is, I dare say, a sensible person, by so close an adherence to propriety. I had scarcely made the reflection, however, when Sir Thomas cried out—‘ So, Skirts, have you brought the breeches home?’ to which having received an answer in the affirmative, he returned—‘ Well, that's an honest fellow—go about your bus'ness.’

Being so much disappointed in the taylor, I wished for the doctor's appearance, and wondered what the deuce could detain him so long: at last the door opened, and a gentleman entered, in a suit of spotted silk, his hair nicely dress'd and bagged, and nothing about him but what bespoke the very meridian of Parisian elegance. Thinks I, if this should be the doctor! My conjecture was not ill-founded; this was the identical son of Galen, whom, if I had not seen actually writing a recipe, I should have positively taken for a Frenchman of fashion, or a figure-dancer at the theatre.

When I was just going away, Sir Thomas's nephew, who has been lately called to the bar, came in from Well-mister, in his gown and tye-wig. ‘ Well,’ says I to myself, ‘ thank Heaven! here is one man who is not ashamed of appearing in character.’ But the young gentleman was not seated above three minutes before he pulled off his wig, in the presence of the whole company, and shewed as smart a head of hair, in the Tyburn taste, as could be found within the bills of mortality. I

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stared, and saw the uncle was not a little diverted with my astonishment; he thought the transformation a very capital circumstance, and seemed proud of a nephew who could alternately put on the gravity of the council, and the pertness of the footman. I was, however,

disgusted extremely, and took my leave, heartily convinced that nothing but a very great weakness of the mind could occasion so many improprieties in the embellishment of the person.

Your's, &c.
SENEX.

N^o L. SATURDAY, JANUARY 21.

IT was a customary answer with the celebrated Dean Swift, when any body asked his opinion of a great man—‘ Stay till I see him in distress.’ For my own part, though I think the reply, according to the general sense of the world, extremely significant, yet I can by no means imagine, that distress is the true touchstone of fortitude: so far on the contrary, it has been my positive belief, for a long time, that he who can best stand the shock, as I may say, of prosperity, gives the best proof of an even mind, and shews the firmest stability of soul, notwithstanding what has been said by our most celebrated philosophers on the other side of the question. Adversity has been justly called the school of wisdom by a variety of writers, because there is nothing which is so expeditious in bringing a man to a knowledge of himself. When reduced to a narrowness of circumstances, or confined to the anxieties of a sick bed, the mind naturally turns her eye on those objects which are most likely to afford her consolation and relief. Religion, in a moment, tells her the uncertainty of all human expectations, and bids her depend alone on those blissful assurances of happiness in another world, which experience has convinced her are so extremely precarious in this: hence she learns a proper mode of thinking, shews an implicit submission to the correcting hand of Providence, and becomes perfectly acquainted with what is due to others, from a just sensibility of what is necessary for herself.

Prosperity, on the other hand, may be considered the school of self-sufficiency, and the almost perpetual parent of pride. Whenever the sun of prosperity sheds a ray upon mankind, they are apt to grow important in their own opinions, and to think rather contemptibly of those very people who were formerly on the list of their intimate friends; the goodness of the Deity they imagine to be the conse-

quence of particular merit, and look upon that as the result of their own immediate sagacity, which is nothing but the unbounded benignity of their God. For these reasons, therefore, I cannot help imagining but what true fortitude, or equanimity, is best seen in prosperity. We admire the tranquillity of a Socrates going to die, but are ravished with the unsulling moderation of a Cæsar, when master of an empire, and still retaining all the complacency of a private citizen.

I am naturally led into these reflections by a visit which I paid the other morning to my old friend Ned Blaze, to congratulate him on an estate of three thousand pounds a year, which lately fell into his possession by the will of an uncle, who good-naturedly left him every thing at his death, but who, while living, would not part with a sixpenny piece to save him from destruction. Ned, for many years past, has struggled with all the difficulties of a high spirit, a large family, and a very narrow fortune: sometimes he has been obliged to stay at home for months, and at others has been months in a jail; yet still he kept up his resolution with all the fortitude of a Stoic, and behaved with a degree of decency and manliness which procured him the universal esteem, and not seldom the universal assistance of his acquaintance.

As I had always a regard for Ned, and, if I may be excused the egotism, had proved this regard upon more occasions than one; I was sincerely rejoiced at his good fortune, and the moment I heard of it, set out to tell him so. When I came to his house, instead of being instantly shewn up stairs by the maid, as had been the custom formerly, a fellow with a bag to his hair, long ruffles, and laced livery, desired me, in broken English, to rest myself in the parlour, and he would carry my name immediately to his master: well, I went into the parlour, sat down, and amused myself

self above an hour with the elegant Essays of my worthy and ingenious friend Dr. Goldsmith, which were accidentally lying in the window. My entertainment was too agreeable for me to think the time long, and I perhaps should not have thought about it at all, if the clock had not alarmed me with the stroke of two. Surprized at this unexpected delay, I touched the bell, and asked the servant if he had told his master of my being below; he replied in the affirmative, and added, that he would wait on me immediately.

In about a quarter of an hour I heard the dining room door opened, and was informed of Mr. Blaze's approach by a slow, heavy, consequential stamp on the stairs: the servant threw open the parlour door for him as he descended, and my friend entered with all the gravity and importance of a very great man. As I fancied he might think it necessary to assume this seriousness of appearance, on such an occasion as the recent death of a near relation, I ran to him with my usual freedom, gave him a hearty shake by the hand, and said—‘ Dear Ned, I am sincerely rejoiced at this happy alteration in your circumstances.’ But I had no longer honest Ned Blaze to deal with; my familiarity, I saw, was infinitely disgusting. Mr. Blaze stole his hand out of mine as soon as he could; and, making me a low bow, replied—‘ Mr. Babler, I thank you.’ We then

sat down; but our conversation lost all that spirit and good-humour which we formerly thought it possessed before Mr. Blaze's unlucky acquisition of fortune: we were as ceremonious, in an instant, as if we had never seen each other before; and every observation upon the fineness of the weather was introduced and concluded with a *Sir*—of perfect good-breeding and gentility. Mr. Blaze, however, being resolved to shew all his consequence, rang, and enquired after the footmen by name, that I might judge the number of his domestics: he then ordered one with a card to my Lord, and another with a compliment to his Grace; asked if the goldsmith had sent home the new service of plate, or if the *vis-a-vis* was yet finished at the coachmaker's. This conversation with the servant was kept up with as much indolence and tediousness as if no such person as myself had been in the room; I therefore thought it but just to shew a proper degree of resentment, by immediately taking my leave: I did so, after receiving a cool invitation to dinner, and being told there was nothing provided but ten or a dozen things, and no company but the Earl of Sharpset and the Countess of Ombre. When I went home, I thought this little narrative would make a tolerable paper, as it served to rivet me in my belief, that the most difficult shock which any man can possibly stand is that of prosperity.

Nº LI. SATURDAY, JANUARY 22.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,
THOUGH every body must allow the character of a coquette to be truly despicable, even among the women; yet, when we find it in the other sex, there is something in it so unmanly, that we feel a detestation equal to our contempt; and look upon the object to be as much an enemy, as he is a disgrace, to society. To prove my assertion, however, Mr. Babler, give me leave to relate a circumstance which lately happened in my own family; and which, if properly attended to, may be of real use to many of your fair readers.

I am a merchant in the city, and have been above five years married to a most

deserving woman; who, as she studies every thing to promote my happiness, obliges me to shew a grateful sensibility for the establishment of her's; and even warms me with a continual wish of anticipating the most distant of her inclinations. About six months ago I took her youngest sister home, as I knew it would give her a satisfaction; intending to supply the loss of a father lately deceased, and to omit no opportunity of advancing her fortune.

My attention could not have been placed on a more deserving object: Harriot, Sir, possesses every beauty of person, and every virtue of mind, that can render her either beloved or respected; and is, in a word, as accomplished a young woman as any in the kingdom: her

her circumstances, besides, are no way inconsiderable; she has ten thousand pounds in the funds; and if she marries to my liking, shall not want for a thousand or two more—but that does not signify.

Among the number of people who visited at our house, Mr. Babler, the son of a very eminent citizen frequently obliged us with his company; a circumstance that pleased me not a little, as he was far from a disagreeable man: his person was remarkably genteel, and his face possessed of a more than ordinary degree of sensibility; he conversed with much ease, was perfectly acquainted with men and things; and, what rendered him a still greater favourite, he sung with an infinity of taste, and played with a considerable share of judgment and a variety of instruments.

This gentleman had not long commenced an intimacy in my family before he shewed a very visible attachment for Harriot, hung upon every thing she said, and approved of every thing she did; but, at the same time, seemed rather more ambitious to deserve her esteem than to solicit it. This I naturally attributed to his modesty; and it rather more confirmed me in the opinion which I entertained of his affection: had he treated her with the customary round of common-place gallantry, I should never have believed him serious; but when I saw him assume a continual appearance of the most settled veneration and esteem; when I saw him unremittingly studious to catch the smallest opportunity of obliging; I was satisfied there was no affectation in the case, and convinced that every look was the spontaneous effusion of his heart.

The amiable Harriot, unacquainted with art, suspected none; and being of a temper the most generous herself, naturally entertained a favourable opinion of every body else. Mr. Selby in particular possessed the highest place in her regard: the winning softness of his manners; the uncommon delicacy of his sentiments; and his profound respect for her, to say nothing of his personal attractions; all united to make an impression on her bosom, and to inspire her with the tenderest emotions of a reciprocal love. She made her sister her confidante upon this occasion about a week ago; and Maria, very properly, told the matter immediately to me.

Finding Harriot's repose was seriously concerned, I determined to give Mr. Selby a fair opportunity of declaring himself the next evening, that there might be no possibility of a mistake in the case, and that my poor girl might be certain she had a heart in exchange for her own. With this view I engaged him on a *tete à tête* party to Vauxhall; and while he was lamenting that my wife and sister were not with us to participate in the amusement, I said, gaily—‘ Egad, ‘ Tom, I have a strange notion that ‘ Harriot has done your business; you ‘ are eternally talking of her when she’s ‘ absent, and as eternally languishing ‘ at her when she’s by. How is all this? ‘ Come, own, have I been right in my ‘ guess? and treat me with the confi- ‘ dence of a friend.’

This question quite disconcerted him; he blushed, stammered, and, with a good deal of pressing, at last drawled out, that Miss Harriot, to be sure, was a most deserving young lady; and that, was he inclined to alter his condition, there was not a woman in the world he would be so proud of having for a wife. But though he was extremely sensible of her merit, he had never considered her in any light but that of a friend; and was to the last degree concerned, if any little assiduities, the natural result of his esteem, had once been misinterpreted, and placed to a different account.

The whole affair was now out; the man's character was immediately before me; and, though I could have sacrificed him on the spot for the meanness and barbarity of his conduct, yet I bridled my resentment, and would not indulge him with a triumph over Harriot, by letting him see I considered his late declaration as a matter of any consequence; I therefore assumed a gaiety which was quite a stranger to my heart, and replied—‘ I am excessively glad, Tom, ‘ to hear you talk in this manner: faith, ‘ I was afraid all had been over with ‘ you; and my friendship for you was ‘ the only reason of my enquiry, as I ‘ shrewdly suspect the young baggage ‘ has already made a disposal of her in- ‘ clinations.’

After passing a joyless evening, we returned to town quite sick of one another's company; and pretty confidently determined to have no intercourse for the future. When I had set Mr. Selby down, I went to Maria, and told her how

how things had turned out, and desired her to break them, with all the delicacy she was mistress of, to her unfortunate sister: she did so; but the shock is likely to prove fatal. Harriot has ever since kept her bed; and for the three last days has been quite delirious: she raves continually on the villain who has murdered her peace of mind; and my bed-side as continually drenched in tears. In spite of all my endeavours to keep the matter private, the tattling of nurses and servants has made it but too public, and denied us even the happiness of being secretly miserable. The moment I heard it talked of, I called upon Mr. Selby and demanded satis-

faction; but could I expect a man to be brave, who was capable of acting such a part as his to a woman of honour and virtue? No, Sir; he called his servants about me in his own house, and after my departure went and swore the peace before a magistrate. This is the only method which I have now left to punish him, and the only one also of exhorting parents and guardians to require an instant explanation from any man who seems remarkably assiduous to make a positive declaration of his sentiments. I am, Mr. Babler, with much respect, your humble servant,

CHARLES TORRINGTON.

N^o LII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 29.

COQUETRY, or a passion for exercising the most unlimited authority of affection or caprice on a lover, is a foible which renders the ladies so extremely ridiculous in the opinion of the world, that it is astonishing how such a number of the fair-sex can possibly give into it, and for the mere sake of making another uneasy, become absolutely contemptible themselves. Abstracted, however, from the ridicule to which such a character is always exposed, there is a degree of meanness and cruelty in the composition of a coquette, which throws the greatest reflection imaginable upon the benevolence of a lady's temper; and does not more depreciate the goodness of her heart, than lessen the opinion we might entertain of her understanding. To delight in rendering a worthy man wretched, for the sake of shewing a little power, is surely what the giddiest creature in the universe must condemn upon a moment's reflection; and when the moreover considers that his wretchedness must always be proportioned to his tenderness for her, gratitude, as well as humanity, must shew her behaviour in a very culpable light, and tell her that every pang which she lodges in his bosom is an absolute dishonour to her own.

The generality of the ladies have a want of candour to answer for, which is too often a source of the severest anxiety to others, as well as a spring of the greatest embarrassment to themselves.

Ravished with the enchanting breath of admiration, they lend a greedy ear to the ardent language of professing love; though, at the same time, it is a thousand to one but they look upon the lover with the most insuperable contempt: hence, though they never intend to bless him with a reciprocal return, they never can prevail upon themselves to give him a final discharge; and the poor man is, in all probability, kept dangling for two or three years, till either avarice or inclination, a large estate, or a red coat, makes a conquest of the heart, and (to use the emphatic words of the celebrated Doctor Young)

—Amply gives, though treated long amis,
The man of merit his revenge in this.

For the honour of the ladies, however, I shall introduce a little narrative to the public observation, which, I hope, will serve as an example to my fair readers, and at the same time convince those infidels, who are averse to believing any thing laudable of the sex, that they are to the full as capable of the most exalted actions as ourselves, however we may erect the crest upon the superior dignity of manhood, or swell upon the acquired advantages of education and knowledge of the world.

About ten years ago a gentleman of considerable family in Ireland, whom I shall distinguish by the name of Butler, being over on an excursion to this metropolis, he accidentally dined at a friend's

friend's house in Pall Mall, where he fell passionately in love with a young lady, whom I must be equally free in concealing under the name of Lambton.

Mr. Butler communicated his sentiments to his friend, who happened to be a relation of Miss Lambton's, and requested his good offices with the lady. The friend, who knew Mr. Butler to be a most deserving young fellow, and was sensible that, in point of birth and fortune, he had considerable advantages over his fair relation, was overjoyed at the proposal, and communicating it to her father next morning, poor Miss Lambton received positive orders to prepare for Mr. Butler's visit that very afternoon.

Mr. Butler came dressed, and a finer figure, perhaps, was not to be found within the Bills of Mortality; he wanted but half an inch of six foot, and was made in a manner remarkably manly, without running into any thing unwieldily clumsy, or awkwardly robust: his face was distinguished with a set of strong marking lines; each feature, to use the poet's expression, 'was expand'd with soul,' and breathed the inexpressible somewhat which discovers the man of fashion at the first glance; add to this, that there was something uncommonly interesting in his very tone of voice, which no less engaged the general attention, than commanded the universal respect: he came in a suit of pompadour velvet, richly embroidered with silver, and seemed as well calculated, in fact, to succeed with a fine lady, as the most celebrated of his countrymen.

Being left designedly alone with Miss Lambton after tea time, he began in a very sensible and polite manner to make a declaration of his sentiments; but had scarcely uttered a sentence, when the young lady interrupted him, and begged his attention for a few words; he made a low bow, and she addressed him to the following purport: 'I am but too apprehensive, Sir, on what account I am honoured with this visit; my father, this morning, made me acquainted with your partiality in my favour; and, to be candid, from the little I have seen of you, I do not know a man in the world, was my heart disengaged, who should sooner command a place in my esteem: but, Sir, it is impossible for me ever to return your sentiments as you could

wish; my affections have for a considerable time been engrossed by a gentleman whom I have been many years acquainted with; and I should think it an unpardonable injury to his tenderness, as well as to your worth, was I to keep this circumstance a moment from your knowledge, after you have indicated the smallest degree of a particular respect.'

It is easy to guess Mr. Butler's astonishment during this speech; he blushed excessively, played with his ruffles, and gave no other interruption than a *Madam* or two, pronounced with the strongest emphasis of surprize. Miss Lambton, seizing the opportunity which his silence afforded, thought it best to disembosom herself entirely, and thus went on—

' From the opinion which I entertain of your generosity, Mr. Butler, I flatter myself you will not use my father's authority, to tear me from the only man I ever can be happy with; nor make any attempts to gain a hand, which, on account of my prior attachment, can never be worthy of yours. Let me conjure you, therefore, dear Sir, to decline your addresses; and if you can have the additional goodness to give such a measure any motive but this declaration, through my whole life I shall be bound to wish you that felicity with some more deserving woman, which it is utterly impossible you should ever enjoy with me.'

I will not trespass upon the reader's patience with an account of what further passed upon this occasion: suffice it, however, that Mr. Butler not only discontinued his addresses from that minute, but interested himself so effectually in favour of Miss Lambton, and her lover, Mr. Seymour, that old Mr. Lambton gave his consent to their marriage, and Mr. Butler himself stood godfather to a fine boy about ten months after.

In the course of a few years, Mr. Seymour, by some lucky hits, accumulated a prodigious fortune, and died, leaving the sum of thirty thousand pounds at the sole disposal of his lady; the rest he divided among his children. Mrs. Seymour, whose affection for her husband was uncommonly tender, did not long survive so great a loss; she fell into a languishing disorder that carried her

her off in about eighteen months, universally regretted by all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance. A little before her decease, however, she made a strict enquiry after Mr. Butler, of whom she had not heard a syllable for the space of seven years: she at last found out that he had retired to the south of France, upon an annuity of a hundred pounds; his fine estate having been entirely destroyed, chiefly through the perfidy of his younger brother, for whom he had been bound in immense sums, and several ineffectual schemes to retrieve the shattered situation of his affairs.

The generous heart of Mrs. Seymour overflowed with pity at his dis-

treſs; his exalted conduct in relation to her and Mr. Seymour, rushed at once upon her recollection; and in her will, which she ordered to be made without delay, she inserted this particular clause with her own hand—‘ I give and bequeath to the Hon. Charles Butler, the sum of ten thousand pounds, on account of his great generosity in withdrawing his addresses when I was unmarried, and using his good offices towards my union with my dear Mr. Seymour.’

This legacy was paid immediately after Mrs. Seymour’s decease; and the story was last night told me by a gentleman of undoubted veracity, who received it himself from Mr. Butler.

Nº LIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

AS you have kindly taken the poor women under your protection, give me leave to complain, through your much-admired paper, of two young fellows, relations of my own indeed, who constantly visit at our house. The first, Sir, is a Templar, lately called to the bar, who thinks the essence of every thing, either amiable or polite, is entirely confined to his profession; and is continually teasing us with pleas, replications, rejoinders, and demurrs: the other is possessed of an independent fortune, and is what the unthinking part of the world calls a man of the town, a person of great humour, and a keen sensible fellow.

As there are three or four girls of us generally together, and both Mr. Brief and Mr. Brazen are men of professed gallantry, they are always sure of joining us at the tea-table, to make the best display of their respective abilities: yet instead of conversing upon those topics which we can cheerfully join in, they talk continually on those subjects which are either totally impossible, or utterly improper, for us to understand. My cousin Brief retails all the causes that are determined in Westminster Hall, with the most insufferable minuteness and insipidity; and, after he has taken up our attention for two hours together, looks round with an air of such prodigious importance, that I have been of-

ten more provoked at this consequential demand of our approbation, for fatiguing us with his impertinence, than even with the impertinence itself, though nothing can be so disgusting, contemptible, and absurd.

But what, if possible, aggravates the error in this worthy cousin of mine, is a custom which he has of putting cases to us, and asking us the meaning of Subpœna, Latitat, Capias, Certiorari, and a thousand other technical terms in the law, which he considers as matters of the greatest importance; and then, Sir, when he has entirely nonplussed us, you would laugh to see how he plumes himself upon the triumph he has acquired; and with how significant a wink he looks round on his friend Mr. Brazen, as much as to bid him observe what a despicable figure he has made of the foolish giddy-headed girls of the company.

Mr. Brazen does not indeed take Mr. Brief’s method of destroying our patience, or insulting our understandings with what we cannot comprehend; for, on the contrary, Sir, he piques himself upon being a remarkably plain speaker, and will not hesitate to pronounce the most apparent indelicacies in the most offensive words: he looks upon it as frankness to be gross, and thinks it a certain sign of wit to be unpardonably rude and unmannly. He told my sister Sally, no later than yesterday, that she was an ignorant little puls; and

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when I took him up for the familiarity, laughed directly in my face, and said I had a prodigious deal of impudence. Then, Sir, he swears so horridly, he terrifies us to death; and scarcely mentions any thing without one of these shocking execrations. From an opinion that indelicacy is a sign of great sense, and a belief that it is very spirited to be blasphemous, he is continually shewing his parts at the expence of common decency; and always making a parade of his courage, by flying in the face of his God! Many is the time, Sir, he has sent me sinking with shame out of the room; and made me shudder with the earnest pronunciation of some new-invented oath, which he has picked up in the licentious circle of his miserable acquaintance.

I am the more concerned, Mr. Babler, for this culpable conduct in my two cousins, because they are both very honest, well-meaning young fellows; and are far from being destitute either of real benevolence or true generosity. I wish, therefore, Sir, you would tell them that nothing can be a greater insult to a woman's understanding, than to converse with her about matters with which it is impossible she should be acquainted; and that nothing can be a

grosser affront to the rectitude of her heart, than the illiberal practice of those indecencies and execrations, which are generally confined to the most profligate of her sex.

I am far, very far, Mr. Babler, from preaching up an unnecessary preciseness or severity of behaviour; on the contrary, I think freedom, while it is confined within the limits of good-breeding, one of the most amiable essentials to the pleasure of every rational company: but, Sir, where this freedom infringes so far upon the bounds of politeness, that a woman is either treated as an idiot, or something infinitely worse, that moment I think the man is entitled to the heaviest censure, who forgets the dignity of her sex, and acts as if she was utterly unworthy either of sensible converse, or common civility.

You men, Mr. Babler, are in general very severe upon the women; you laugh at us for talking about our caps, our ribbands, or our lap-dogs: I would advise your lordly sex, however, to look at home; and before they think of plucking the mote out of our eyes, to be pretty certain there are no beams in their own. Yours, &c.

AMANDA.

N° LIV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12.

AS my fair correspondent Amanda's letter, inserted in my last paper, has given, I am told, a general satisfaction; it will not, I hope, be disagreeable to my readers, if I resume the subject, especially as I want to introduce a little journal to their observation, which was lately presented to me with the papers of a deceased man of quality, who was unhappily a man of gallantry also, and indulged a licentiousness of thinking, in some cases, that reflected no great honour either upon his humanity or understanding.

I have frequently remarked what a degree of nicety is requisite in the education of young women; and delivered it, as my opinion, that those parents were very fortunate, who, from the sex of their children, had none of the various consequences to apprehend, which the least indiscretion in the ladies is constantly sure of bringing on a family. I

have said that the same levity of conduct which would steep a woman in the grossest lees of infamy, is entirely overlooked, if not publicly approved, in a man; and that the mere circumstance of sex gives him a kind of privilege to practise a number of irregularities, that would render an uncultivated female the scandal of society.

But at the same time that the depravity of custom has given this unhappy superiority to the men; at the time that our lordly sex is invested by the world with a prescriptive title of violating the most sacred of the divine ordinances, neither reason nor religion have given us the least exemption from undergoing that dreadful examination in another life, which is so fatally disregarded in this. When we see the most triumphant libertine in his moments of illness, or his hours of reflection, it is then we find that this boasted right of doing wrong is nothing more

more than a glittering gewgaw that leads us into a certain destruction, and ought to be lamented as the greatest of all misfortunes, instead of being considered as a matter of consolation, or looked upon with an eye of appetite or joy. To speak in the language of the poet—

When we behold him languidly opprest
On Death's pale couch all ghastly and de-
clin'd,
Or dragg'd before the godhead of his breast,
And damn'd to all the hells within his
mind:

'Tis then th' intrinsic nothingness of fame,
In all it's pomp of emptiness shall rise,
Teach Wisdom's cheek to redden at a name,
And Virtue's bow to furrow and despise.

Highly soever as the round of masculine errors may be envied by the ignorant, or coveted by the profligate, I ask the greatest libertine existing, who is not utterly destitute of common understanding, how he would, upon a cool consideration, choose to be thought the author of the following journal? though I shall give him a bit of encouragement into the bargain, which is, that few people in the gay world were ever better received than the person who wrote it.

THE JOURNAL OF A LIBERTINE.

FOR fear any thing of consequence should escape my memory, sat down January the 17th, 1744, to make a journal of all my adventures.—Paid a debt of 500l. to Lord Worthless, which I lost upon betting my mother's life against his bay gelding's; the old haridan having gone off last week with an asthma.

Memorandum. To make my different tradesmen abate a regulated proportion from each of their bills, till the foregoing sum is reimbursed.

Turned off my housekeeper Jenkins, for her insolence in resenting some innocent liberties which I casually took with her daughter.

Sent a letter to my friend Hilman's wife, making an appointment—blest with an answer to my wish—drest for the purpose—uneasy—Hilman saved my life once in the country, and broke his own arm in the attempt—lent me several considerable sums of money—

and shewed me several important acts of friendship—cruel to dishonour him—the glory of the action irresistible—my scruples laid aside—a chair at the door.

Met Mrs. Hilman—happy—hinted it that very evening at the coffee-house—a challenge from the husband three days after—disarmed in Hyde Park—ask pardon—curstly down in the mouth.

At the Chapel Royal Easter Sunday—saw a fine young girl, about sixteen, in one of the aisles—ordered Will to dog her home—found she was a hosier's daughter near the Strand—made Will watch for an opportunity of slipping a note into her hand in the Park—succeeded on Thursday—she and a relation drink tea with me at a milliner's near Covent Garden next Sunday evening.

Monday morning. Last night detained Polly Homespun from her family—prevailed upon her to go into a private lodging—Wednesday, Polly advertised—hear that her father, in a fit of despair, makes away with himself on Saturday morning—vexed.

May 25th. Heartily tired of Polly—ordered Will to pay off her lodgings, to give her a couple of guineas, and to tell her I had no more business for her—shall set out for the country to-morrow morning.

June 3d. In the country—horse-whipped Farmer Harrow, for passing me without taking off his hat—6th, caught his son Dick shooting at a mark near the road side, and took his gun under a pretence that he was going to poach in my manor.

10th. Ordered Rack, my steward, to throw the fellow that keeps the Cross Inn into gaol—the rascal having the impudence to think an accidental fire, which burned down his stables, was a sufficient reason for me to excuse him a year's rent.

11th. The inn-keeper's wife came with a petition—a likely black wholesome looking woman, of about eight-and-twenty—spoke kindly to her, and offered, upon certain conditions, to give her husband time for paying the money—refused with disdain—the insolent hussy turned out of doors, and Rack ordered to proceed against the fellow directly.

12th. The inn-keeper in jail—a letter from the man where Polly Homespun

spun lodged, telling me that she had been melancholy for a few days, and the evening before had thrown herself into Rosamond's Pond, where she was drowned—curst the puppy's impertinence for troubling me about the matter, and sent him half a guinea towards defraying her funeral charges.

For the honour of human nature I shall stop here; the remainder of the journal is nothing but a repetition of

cruelty and lust. I hope, among my readers, there is no part of the foregoing memorandums which can be applicable to themselves: if a similitude should be found to any of their acquaintance, let not the privilege of the sex a moment extenuate the baseness of the man, but let every body exclaim, in the language of Horace—

Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto.

Nº LV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

Here send you a remark or two upon a very celebrated performance, which, in it's particular walk of genius, has been mentioned as a master-piece, and possibly produced more imitators than any other poem in this age and kingdom. I need scarcely tell you, Mr. Babler, that this piece is Gray's Elegy in a Country Church-yard: a piece, Sir, which though I much admire, I can by no means imagine to be so extremely perfect a work as it has been generally considered; and the following are some of the reasons why I differ from the public opinion in this respect.

The very first line, Sir, which begins this elegy, is an unsuccessful attempt at metaphor, palpably repugnant to the rules of poetry and universal experience.

The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,

Visibly alluding to the ringing of a bell at the death of somebody. The author should have recollected, however, that this bell is never rung till somebody is actually dead; and that, therefore, the term *parting*, is consequently a false metaphor: had he said, indeed, that

The Curfew tolls the knell of *parted* day,

There could be no possibility of objection; but *parting* is every whit as incongruous here, as it would be in real life to toll a passing bell for a man, before he had positively given up the ghost.

In the course of the reflective part, we come to the following stanzas:

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid,
Some heart once pregnant with celestial
fire;
Hands which the reins of empire might
have sway'd,
And wak'd to extacy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er
unroll,
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of their soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The deep unfathom'd caves of Ocean
bear,
Full many a flow'r is born to blush unseen,
And waste it's sweetnes in the desert air.

Some village Hampden, who with dauntless
breast
The little tyrants of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest;
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's
blood.

You see, Mr. Babler, notwithstanding both the thought and versification in those stanzas are extremely beautiful, yet there is a lapse of no trifling nature in the execution. The author, in the very moment that he intended to lash Cromwell with the greatest severity, introduces him in the same company with Hampden and Milton, the objects of his highest admiration; and laments in the same introductory passage, that

Chill Penury repress'd his noble rage,
And froze the genial current of his soul.

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It is odd, that a *noble* rage should ever be a *guilty* one; and somewhat surprising, that a person of our author's extensive abilities could find no happier mode of conveying his censure and his applause: indeed, in the two subsequent stanzas, he has endeavoured to explain himself a little; but, as Lady Townly aptly expresses it, it is nothing more than darning an old ruffle, to make it the worse for mending.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes.

Their lot forbade; nor circumscrib'd alone
Their growing virtues; but their crimes
confin'd,
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on man-kind.

Here, Mr. Babler, in the second line of the last stanza, Cromwell is allowed his share of virtue as well as Hampden or Milton; and they, in the pronoun plural *their*, are dragged in for their share of vices as well as that celebrated usurper: so that upon the whole, though we guess the author's meaning well enough, the stanzas are nevertheless a strange huddle of inconsistency, and not a little injurious to the perspicuity of their elegant author.

In the epitaph we are told,

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Now, for my own part, I can by no means see any merit in being marked out by Melancholy for her own, though the conjunction 'And,' at the beginning of the last line, seems to hint pretty strongly, that melancholy is a necessary concomitant of science. I shall be bold enough to affirm, that if the word 'But,' was substituted for 'And,' the reading would be much improved, and occasion a much stronger idea of tenderness, than what can possibly be ex-

cited by the present word. The epitaph was written on purpose to spread a tenderness through the mind of the reader; but the word 'And,' making it, as I said before, a matter of merit to be melancholy, the passage naturally fails of its intended effect; whereas, had it been thus—

' Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
' But Melancholy mark'd him for her own,'

We should have then lamented, that a worthy youth, enriched with the gifts of science, had the smallest reason for despondency, and shed a generous tear in sympathy with his misfortunes.

The last stanza, in my opinion, is either extremely perplexed, or extremely indefensible.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Nor draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

This stanza, if it has any meaning at all, can mean nothing but this: that it is improper to examine either the merits or frailties of the person deceased, since they are both alike reposed in one dread abode, the bosom of his Father and his God. This is the first time I ever heard of a human creature making the bosom of his Deity a repository for his errors; and, in the present case, I think the fault still more inexcusable, because the violence offered to reason and religion has no way assisted the poetry; this being perhaps as lame a passage as any in the whole piece.

From the foregoing cursory hints, which I have thrown out with no ill-natured design, Mr. Babler, I hope your readers will see, there is a possibility of discovering motes in the sun, and be a little cautious for the future, how they mention any thing as the criterion of merit, without first of all making a candid enquiry, to see whether it has not some imperfections. Yours,

MISERY MUSTARD.

N^o LVI. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26.

MY nephew Harry called on me this morning, and mentioned one of my papers which was prodigiously commended by several of his acquaintance, particularly by Miss Cornelia Marchmont, who desired him, in very strong terms, to give me her compliments for the masterly rules which I had there laid down for the service of the ladies. I do not know how it was, but I received a considerable share of satisfaction from this compliment. Miss Marchmont is a young lady of twenty-one, mistress of every polite accomplishment, and every shining virtue; and carries, in an exquisite sweetnes of countenance, the most expressive indications of her fine understanding, and her excellent heart. My young rogue has, I fancy, a month's mind to her; and, if I am at all acquainted with the language of the eyes, Cornelia is no way displeased with that circumstance. Harry, as yet, has told me nothing, but I believe it will be a match; if it should, I intend taking up my residence with them for the remainder of my days, and shall leave my little all to them and their children.

The reader may possibly suspect, that I am more than commonly sensible of this young lady's merit, through a principle of vanity for the flattering encomium with which she has favoured my productions. I shall candidly acknowledge, that it made me somewhat vain; but I hope I shall be also believed, when I say, her complaisance no way enhanced my opinion of her accomplishments. And now I am talking of vanity, I cannot help observing how universally subject the human mind is to the attacks of this dangerous enemy; for my own part, though an old fellow, when I have written any thing which I conceive may be useful, or done any thing which I fancy may be praise-worthy, I strut alone in my study with a degree of consequence scarcely credible; till recollecting how ridiculous a figure I make in the eye of my own examination, I blush at my self sufficiency, and immediately turn my thoughts upon some object which can be considered with a greater share of credit both to

my modesty and my understanding—
But to return.

In the course of Harry's conversation with me, he said, that Miss Marchmont had given him a letter for the use of the Babler, which she requested might be inserted in the present number.

' This letter,' says Harry, ' she lately wrote in answer to a very passionate epistle from a young fellow who has a company in the Guards; and who, thinking her to be like the generality of the sex, imagined a few fine expressions, and a red coat, were sufficient to render her insensible to all the duties which she owed to herself and her family.'

TO COLONEL ——.

SIR,

I have just this moment received a letter from you, in so very extraordinary a style, that, should I hesitate an instant to answer it, the integrity of my own heart might be called into question; or I might at least be supposed inclined to encourage your wishes, by the appearance of a tacit approbation. To prevent the possibility of this alternative, I must take the liberty of examining your sentiments pretty closely; and I flatter myself, that, for your own sake, you will pay some little attention to the following arguments; lightly soever as you might be led to consider them through any solicitude for mine.

You set out with saying, how tender an affection you have conceived for me; and what a very high opinion you entertain both of my heart and my understanding!—Upon my word, Sir, you have an uncommon share of penetration; for you were never in my company above half an hour in your days, and during that time you yourself made so conspicuous a figure in the conversation, that I had not an opportunity of saying twenty syllables. To be sure, your subsequent entreaty is rather unhappy, when my amazing qualifications come to be considered; for the proof you desire me to give of a good disposition, is to violate all the dignity and decorum of my sex, by entering into a correspondence

spondence with an absolute stranger; and the testimony you want of my good sense, is to keep your delicate declaration of love from the knowledge of the only people in the world to whom it ought to be first of all revealed—my father, and the rest of my family.

In the name of wonder, Sir, who are you, that you should presume to think me capable either of such a meanness or such an absurdity? What mighty merit are you possessed of, that you should imagine half a dozen lines are powerful enough to destroy all the principles which I have been imbibing for the course of a whole life? Or what extraordinary obligations have you conferred upon me, that I must, in an instant, sacrifice my own peace, and the tranquillity of my family, for no other end but that of gratifying your inclinations?

O, but you love me; and therefore gratitude should oblige me to return you a favourable answer!—Admitting the possibility even of such a circumstance; pray, Sir, let me ask you, for whose sake do you love me, mine or your own? If it be for your own, of course I am under no manner of obligation; and if it should turn out, as I am very much inclined to believe, that you do not love me, can these fine speeches of yours, do you imagine, protect you from my honest indignation and contempt? Surely, if your pretensions were of a nature that merited any body's encouragement,

there could be no occasion for this sinner method of urging them. But I see through your ridiculous drift, Sir: you are positive that your fulsome declaration of a passion will charm me into an utter disregard for the sentiments of honour and filial affection, and render my consummate wisdomship totally incapable of acting with the least degree of prudence or common understanding.

O, but you mean honourably, and aspire at the happiness of my hand!—A pretty method you take, indeed, of soliciting my good opinion, by supposing me not only an undutiful daughter, but an absolute fool! Be assured, Sir, if I ever alter my condition, a father's approbation must first of all countenance my choice; and a perfect acquaintance with my lover's temper and principles confirm it. But, to put an end at once to your solicitations, give me leave to inform you, that it is by my father's command I write this letter; and that the disingenuous part you have acted on the present occasion, renders it utterly impossible for you ever to obtain a favourable sentiment either from him, or from

CORNELIA MARCHMONT.

I shall make no comment on this letter, but recommend the example to the imitation of those among my fair readers who shall ever be in the same circumstances with the amiable writer.

Nº LVII. SATURDAY, MARCH 5.

I Was sitting at home the other morning ruminating on a subject for my next paper, when the penny-post-man rapped at the door, and gave Thomas the following epistle, which I here present to the reader without the alteration of a syllable.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am a constant reader of your paper, and am very often entertained with the easy and familiar manner in which, to use my Lord Bacon's expression, 'you bring home things to mens business and bosoms.' Some time ago, I remember myself particularly struck with the Journal of a Libertine, and thought it an excellent way of lashing

the vices of our men of gallantry, who claim an indisputable right of destroying the happiness of every family into which they are admitted. The mode of journalizing brought to my remembrance a little paper which I had written myself about seven years ago, and called, The Journal of an Author. At that time, Mr. Babler, some youthful indiscretions deprived me of a father's protection, and I was reduced to the most miserable of all distresses, that of writing for bread: but whether I had too much pride, or too little merit, or both, I shall not take upon me to say; but my situation affected me so much, that I once drew up the following state of it for a week, and thought of inserting it in a magazine with which I happened to be connected.

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The printer, however, refused it a place; and my father becoming reconciled to me in a little time after, it has since lain by, and is now at your service for publication.

MONDAY morning. Rose at seven, to write an Eastern tale against eight—finished it in time; but going down stairs, the maid, who came up to light the fire, thrust it into the grate, and consumed what was to maintain me for the whole day—being nettled, I spoke in pretty severe terms about her negligence, when unluckily her mistress, who happened to be coming up stairs, told me I should wake Mr. Fustian, the actor, who lived in the two-pair-of-stairs room under me; and desired I would think of getting her some money, for I was no less than a fortnight in arrear—Silenced—and sat down to perform my task a second time; but the printer coming for copy, and being chagrined at the disappointment, some words ensued between us, and he swore to look out directly for another hand.

Three o'clock. Too proud to make an apology to Mr. Type—I sauntered to the Park, and accidentally fell into chat with a young fellow on one of the seats—In the course of the conversation, I learned that he was a writer too—so guessing his business in the Park to be much the same with my own—I took my leave of him for fear of entering into any disagreeable explanation in regard to circumstances—Eight o'clock, got sixpence upon my clean shirt at the pawnbroker's—and dined upon a mutton-chop and a pint of beer at the Black Lyon in Russel Street—An unexpected misfortune—upon coming to pay my reckoning, found the sixpence had slipped through a hole in my pocket, which I had never before discovered—in the utmost confusion—insulted before the whole company by the waiter, with the aggravating circumstance of hearing several infamous jests upon my black coat—relieved at last by the humanity of the landlord, who happened to overhear the matter—threatened to turn the waiter off for his insolence—and calling me out of the room, slipped half a guinea in my hand—but when I was going about to thank him, turned away, and pulling out his handkerchief, complained of very sore eyes.

TUESDAY. Paid my landlady three

shillings for her fortnight's lodging—redeemed my shirt—and bought a pair of breeches for three and sixpence at a cellar in Monmouth Street—lived very comfortably on eighteen-pence this day and the following.

THURSDAY. Called upon by a printer, who wanted me to write something on the plan of Cleland's *Mulier Voluptatis*, assuring me it would have a prodigious sale—declined his offer—talked to about assisting in a commentary on the Bible, and offered five shillings a week for every number of my notes—accepted the proposal—having no other prospect of existence—proceeded immediately on the task—and finished a number, to my unspeakable disgrace, in a night-cellar that very evening.

FRIDAY. Mr. Compose came for a copy, and insisted upon my taking a pint of purl with him at the Cat and Bagpipes—advanced me half a guinea upon account, and passed his word to a civil well-looking man, one Mr. Heelpiece, with whom he happened to be in company, for a pair of shoes—charmed with his good-nature, I made him a present of four odes, which he was kind enough to praise prodigiously, and which I had afterwards the pleasure of hearing he sold for a couple of guineas to a bookseller in the Row.

SATURDAY. Invited to dine by my landlord, at the Black Lyon—insisted upon paying him his half guinea—but he had not yet got the better of his sore eyes—being a taylor as well as a publican, he took me up stairs, and made me a present of a handsome suit of cloaths which he had made for me on purpose—saying, with a careless air—‘ Whenever you come to a chariot, Mr. Spondee, it will be time enough to think of returning the compliment.’—My eyes excessively sore at that instant.

SUNDAY. Quite smart—walked in the Park—and was applied to by several booksellers, who probably judged of my abilities by my appearance—undertook business for several, and after got money enough to live decently, though with an aching heart—The wives of some would criticise on my performances; and one good-natured lady, who was suspected of assisting her husband in a certain review, would insist that I should submit my pieces to her correction—this was so extremely irksome, that

that I at last determined to try my fortune in a distant quarter of the world — when my father sent his steward with the blissful tidings of reconciliation to my lodgings; since when I have entirely dropped my acquaintance with

the Muses, and taken many an agreeable tour with my landlord of the Black Lion, in my own coach, to the different villas about this metropolis. I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

SEBASTIAN SPONDEE.

N° LVIII. SATURDAY, MARCH 12.

GREATLY as the degeneracy of the present age may be talked of, or highly soever as we may imagine the people of ancient times to surpass us either in morality or understanding, I am nevertheless perfectly satisfied, that there is as much good sense, and as much real virtue, to be met with in our own days, as ever was found in the days of our forefathers; notwithstanding the meritorious cobwebs of antiquity have happily concealed a number of their follies and their faults, and thrown a friendly veil of oblivion over no inconsiderable share of their imperfections.

The writers of the present times are not indeed burthened with the monstrous affectation which was so commonly met with among the philosophers of antiquity, and therefore are probably held in a less consequential light, both with regard to their principles and their abilities; this, however, if properly considered, is one reason why they may have a greater share of the latter, though it does not, in the remotest manner, insinuate an inference of their being any way inferior in the first. Many of the ancient sages owed the greatest part of their reputation to circumstances which would entitle a modern to a dark room and a truss of straw, or excite the general contempt at least against his folly and impertinence. What would we think of a philosopher now-a-days, if, instead of arguing the world by the force of sound reasoning out of their vices and absurdities, he should be in continual tears about the former, and in a perpetual fit of laughing at the last? What would we say to any moralist, who would search the public streets at noon with a candle and lanthorn, and tell every body he met, that he was endeavouring to find an honest man? Or, what would we say to a Cynic, who, by way of exhorting his countrymen against the allurements of luxury, would make use of no other persuasives than bidding

a total adieu to every social enjoyment, and taking up his residence in a tub?

The writers of a later date look with a just disdain upon such despicable instances of affectation, and do not address themselves to the weakness, but to the understanding, of their countrymen: it is not the passions which they want to work upon, but the understanding which they want to convince; and are infinitely more solicitous to establish a respectable opinion of their judgment and their integrity, than ambitious to purchase an immortality by the practice of an illustrious absurdity, which, however it may dazzle a moment upon the imagination, the cooler reflections of reason must consider with the most insuperable contempt. Far be it from me to pluck the smallest bay from the brow of antiquity; I sincerely venerate many lessons inculcated by several of the philosophers; but at the same time I cannot be totally insensible to the imperfections of their times, or palpably blind to the merits of our own: for this reason I must stand up for the character of modern understanding, and declare it as my opinion, that I think no two philosophers, in the whole compass of antiquity, have surpassed Bacon and Newton, either in the extent or importance of their works; and, however I may incur the censure of classical readers, I will go farther, and venture to assert, that Shakespeare and Milton are poets of as much excellence as either Homer or Virgil; and possibly, if the English language was but half so universally studied as the Greek or Latin, I should find thousands who would not hesitate to give a more exalted forum of reputation to the two illustrious moderns, than to the two celebrated names of antiquity, who have for so many ages been considered as a sort of *ne plus ultra* to human genius, in every performance of a poetical tendency.

Having said thus much in defence of

M modern

modern understanding, I shall say a few words in support of modern virtue against the heavy accusations of degeneracy, which some inconsiderate writers are but too apt to lay at our door, and but too ready to fasten on the credulity of the public.

It must be readily granted, that the history of modern times affords sufficient instances of vices, which reduce human nature to the basest of all levels, and throw the blackest stigma not only upon the dignity, but upon the very name of man: yet, if we take a review of more distant ages, we shall find equal examples of rapine, perjury, and blood. The civilized states of Greece produced as many scenes of ambition, tyranny, and murder, as can possibly be found among the most barbarous nations; and the virtuous Romans themselves, at the very moment they were affecting an uncommon sanctity of manners, were robbing all the world to inculcate maxims of justice, and cutting whole nations to pieces, to teach them lessons of benevolence and humanity. Greece had it's Philip and it's Alexander, if France had her Louis the XIVth; and Rome had her Cæsar, if England had her Cromwell; she also has a Caligula and a Nero to blacken everlastingly upon her annals,

if ours are stigmatized with an arbitrary Charles, or a bigotted James. When I mention Louis the XIVth, I by no means design to compare him with Philip or Alexander in any thing but his ambition and his rapacity; they are in every other respect so infinitely the more exalted murderers, that the sensible reader will readily perceive in this respect I intend a very limited parallel.

Seeing, therefore, that the most celebrated of the ancient æras cannot produce greater poets and philosophers than what appears upon the modern list, I should be glad to ask what reasonable opinion can be assigned for our supposed depravity in understanding? And I should be also glad to know how the charge of a depravity in manners can be supported, when, upon a candid review of the ancient annals, they appear to be covered with at least an equal share of absurdities and crimes. That the modern æra is bad enough, we have too many lamentable testimonies; but there is no necessity to aggravate either our weakness or our guilt, by making us worse than former times; which, wherever we examine, were, in the general, a compound of the greatest villains and the grossest fools.

Nº LIX. SATURDAY, MARCH 19.

WHEN the celebrated Voltaire was in England, he paid a visit to the famous Mr. Congreve, though he was utterly unacquainted with him; and with that happy violation of ceremony, which is the characteristic of elevated genius, introduced himself upon the mere account of their respective literary reputations. The Englishman was, however, disconcerted; and instead of looking upon the frankness of Voltaire's behaviour as the greatest compliment that could be paid him, he said he would be glad of being visited by Mr. Voltaire as a private gentleman, but could not think of cultivating a friendship with any body, barely on the account of being an author. The Frenchman, disgusted at this untimely instance of affectation, turned upon his heel, and replied, with severity, that had not Mr. Congreve been somewhat more than a private gen-

tleman, he never would have suffered the trouble of that interview.

The slightest survey of mankind will convince a rational enquirer, that the generality of people are influenced by as injudicious a principle in their actions, as Mr. Congreve in the present circumstance. To avoid the imputation of one extremity, they insensibly run into another; and let the character be what it will which they are fearful of incurring, an excessive solicitude to avoid it exposes them frequently to one equally absurd, and excites, while they imagine themselves perfectly secure from ridicule or censure, the universal laugh or disesteem of their acquaintance. I am naturally led into these reflections by a letter from a correspondent, whose favours I shall be always proud of receiving, and whose good opinion I shall always study to deserve, while my leisure and

and my inclination allow me to scribble for the amusement of the public.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THOUGH the world seldom holds any set of people in a more ridiculous light than your pretty delicate race of beings, who are unceasingly employed in the decoration of their persons; yet, for my own part, I think the eternal fop to the full as contemptible a character as the coxcomb professed; nay, if possible, I consider him as the worst of the two, since, though the latter may provoke your mirth, he does not turn your stomach; and is at most but an object of laughter, without giving any occasion for disgust. I lately spent a few weeks near Whitehaven, in Cumberland, Mr. Babler, where I had frequent opportunities of conversing with a very worthy clergyman, who formerly was my schoolmaster, and who has as good a heart and as clear an understanding as any man in the kingdom. As we kept company on the most unreserved terms of friendship, my powdered head of hair and white coat was a continual source of entertainment to him; and he would often call me a young coxcomb, if in walking through a wet field or a dirty road, I seemed to take the smallest pains about my stockings, or expressed a casual wish that I had not come abroad without my boots. A very trifling concern about the accumulating sableness of a shirt, would procure me a lecture of half an hour; and a clean handkerchief once a day, was a piece of unpardonable fopery that merited the discipline of a horsewhip. In short, Sir, being barely decent in my externals, was sure of drawing an imputation upon the little share of understanding I possess; and in proportion as I was tolerably dressed, I was certain of being told I had an intolerable degree of vanity.

The good-humoured liberties thus taken with my appearance, I constantly retorted upon my reverend friend for running into the most disagreeable negligence imaginable. If my powdered head and smooth chin afforded him a laugh, I was no less merry with his antiquated grizzel and long beard; and for every sarcasm thrown out against my white cotton stockings, I never failed to be witty on his coarse yarn ones, which, through an absolute piece of af-

fection, he continually wore half way about his heels. In this manner we used to joke when at a loss for conversation; and it generally proved a matter of no little entertainment to the honest country people, to hear us rating one another so heartily.

This perpetual negligence in the appearance of my worthy friend, very often led me to reflect upon the motive which could induce so many people of excellent understandings to be so extremely regardless of their persons; and I never could imagine but that it was some strange kind of vanity which in general produced this unaccountable fopishness, notwithstanding to avoid every imputation of vanity is the universal plea of all the fopish of my acquaintance. Looking upon any remarkable attachment to dress as a proof of a weak mind, your men of sense affect to be entirely above it; and, willing to enhance their own consequence by depending solely on the force of intellectual merit, they run to studied indecencies of appearance; and very often carry not only a dirty shirt, but an unsavoury effluvia, into the politest companies.

People of sense should, however, consider, that a cleanliness in dress is not a little conducive to health; and that it can be no derogation from their understandings, to make use of an occasional basin of water in the scowering of their hands and face. All extremes are an imputation upon our judgments; and the best proof which men of abilities can give of their superior wisdom, on ordinary occasions, is to avoid the smallest appearance of singularity. Wherever we see men running into singularities of any kind, we may safely conclude, that the judgment is not perfectly right; but when we see these singularities have a tendency only to occasion universal disgust, we may be satisfied, that whoever is guilty of them, is possessed of an uncommon share of pride at the bottom; and thinks that the accomplishments of his mind sufficiently atone for any egregious disregard of his person.

Every man owes something to the satisfaction of his friends, notwithstanding so many people absurdly imagine they are entirely formed for themselves. A philosopher, or a poet, may challenge our admiration on the score of his abilities; yet if he sacrifices all consideration

to a decency in his appearance, it is impossible he should ever be beloved. Converse with him we may, but we can neither chuse to sit near him at table, nor pledge him out of the same glass; and however we may despise a coxcomb for his

vanity, and want of understanding, we shall be always inclined to give him the preference to a notorious sloven, both in every public place, and at every social entertainment. I am, Sir, &c.

VERAX.

Nº LX. SATURDAY, MARCH 26.

THOUGH no man can be a greater admirer of English hospitality than myself, I have nevertheless been frequently offended at seeing this hospitality carried to a ridiculous excess; and have always imagined, where I saw the master of a house running into a large expence merely for the entertainment of two or three intimate friends, that he must entertain either a very improper opinion of himself, or a strange idea of his company.

I dined yesterday with my old friend Ned Grumble, the council at Gray's Inn, with whom I went to school; and who, notwithstanding the smart air which an occasional queue wig gives him, is at least eight-and-fifty, and ought to know a little more of the world than what he manifested in his entertainment. There were but three of us, Ned, Dr. System the naturalist, and myself; yet we had dinner enough from the tavern to serve twenty, and such a profusion of luxuries, that the bare eatables must at least have amounted to six or seven pounds. To be sure, Ned is a man of fortune, and can afford to treat his friends very genteelly; but, for my own part, I never form my notions of gentility by the standard of extravagance. I do not love to see money unnecessarily thrown away; and always wish that people of condition would apply the superfluities of their income either to the relief of merit in distress, or to those objects which must promote the general welfare of their country.

As the various courses came in, I observed Ned was secretly pleased with the air of surprize which I naturally put on, and seemed to rise in his own opinion in proportion to the elegance of his table. With a look of indifference he pressed the doctor and I to eat hearty; and with a very ridiculous kind of an affectation, lamented that there was nothing which we could possibly like. He wished the

dinner had been to our tastes; and with the long list of customary excuses which usually pass for good breeding in second-rate companies, he promised the next time we favoured him with a visit, we should be accommodated in a manner infinitely more to our satisfaction.

When I returned home, I could not help reflecting on the pernicious prevalence of customs in the generality of our convivial entertainments. The eternal endeavour at parade and magnificence, I considered as the natural result of vanity; and saw that by much the principal part of the world was considerably more studious to arrogate the opinion of their own importance, than to promote the satisfaction of their friends. Every dish which was added to a table, I found was looked upon as an addition to the merit of the entertainer; and he that was a clever fellow with a Turbot, was still cleverer if he could furnish a John Dory, or provide any other article of luxury equally expensive and unnecessary.

If, however, we examine this matter properly, we shall always find that an excess of preparation, instead of being a real compliment, is nothing better than indirect offence; it is a tacit insinuation, either that our guests are not generally used to such delicacies as we have provided for them, or that it is absolutely necessary to bribe the depravity of their palates, when we would desire the favour of their company. The great art of entertaining with elegance is to entertain with reason. To do this we must consult the nature of our circumstances, and the rank of our friends. If the first are narrow, we expose ourselves to the severest censure, as well as the keenest ridicule, by aping the luxurious abundance of a Lord Mayor's table; and let the latter be what it will, we should endeavour to treat them after the customary manner in which they treat themselves in their own families. For this reason,

reason we should never insult a poor man with all the magnificence of fifty covers, nor invite a lord to an humble shin of beef. A decent supply of good dishes should always be in readiness, but nothing ever studied for unnecessary parade. Plenty, and not profusion, should be the characteristic of our board; and we should constantly recollect, that those are utterly unworthy the appellation of friends, who could wish us to squander a parcel of valuable pounds for the mere sake of making an empty display of our opulence, when the sum thus extravagantly laid out might be applied to a number of very salutary purposes.

There are several people, however, who are hurried away by an unaccountable desire of appearing extremely splendid in their entertainments, and make it a sort of point to keep a table considerably above their circumstances. I remember poor Dick Thornton would frequently invite people to dinner, and treat with Champagne and Burgundy, though he borrowed the money which paid the bill of fare, but the evening before, from some of his guests, or pitifully begged a fortnight's credit at the Mitre in Fleet Street.

Hospitality, to be sure, requires every man to receive his acquaintance with the utmost cordiality and warmth, but it by no means desires people of small fortune to be constantly impoverish-

ing themselves for the sake of keeping an extensive circuit of company; neither does it dictate that those with full purses should ever run into extravagance. None, however, mistake the matter more than young fellows who are just entering into the world, and have no other prospect of supporting themselves than the success of their respective avocations. Betrayed by too great a generosity of temper, they imagine they never can shew a sufficient welcome to their friends; and hence they inconsiderately provide twenty or thirty dishes for those very men whose general round of living they know to be a plain simple joint, or a frugal beef-steak at a tavern. For my own part, whenever it has been my lot to dine with persons of this cast, the uncommon excellence of my entertainment has entirely spoiled my stomach; and I have lost all relish to eating, merely from recollecting what a considerable sum a good-natured young fellow must have idly thrown away, through a desire of manifesting an extraordinary respect for his company.

The publication of this little stricture will, I hope, in some measure, remove so great an absurdity. People of good sense want little more than a bare mention of their errors to produce an amendment: and by the reformation which I may hear occasioned by the present hint, I shall immediately judge the understanding of my readers.

Nº LXI. SATURDAY, APRIL 2.

IN the course of my little strictures, I have frequently endeavoured to disown the scandalous propensity which I have observed in a number of old fellows for an obscenity of conversation; a propensity which, even in the thoughtless and giddy-headed state of youth, is extremely culpable, and no less disgraces the politeness of the gentleman, than lessens the understanding of the man. In the present paper I shall lay a picture before my readers, which, though really drawn for a particular person, will, I fear, prove much too general a resemblance; but which, if it should fortunately prove a means of reforming a single individual, will make me think my time very well bestowed, and induce me, perhaps, to take up

the subject again at another opportunity.

Last night, having received a most pressing invitation from an old relation of mine, I went and supped at his house. The company consisted of his lady, his son, and his two daughters, a very eminent clergyman in the city, and myself. My friend is one of those people, who, having formerly cut a very gay figure in the world, is still ambitious of spreading the May-bloom of twenty-five upon the winter of three-score; and desirous of displaying in the fulness of his spirits that sprightliness and vivacity which time has relentlessly taken from his person: with this view he is everlastingly aiming at double entendres, and will not even hesitate to crack

crack his indelicate ambiguities upon his children. On the contrary, he often attacks his daughters with a vein of the most culpable levity; and tells them, when the poor young ladies are ready to sink with shame and mortification, that they know very well what he means, and that he is perfectly sensible they are both languishing for husbands.

As my old friend suffers me to take more liberties with him than he can bear from any body else, I always endeavour to keep him in a little order; and this renders my visit uncommonly welcome to his family. Last night I managed him pretty well, and we had not above ten or a dozen indelicacies during supper-time: but the cloth was no sooner removed, than he cried—‘ Come, Mr. Babler, I’ll give you a toast.’ This was what the ladies extremely apprehended, and they all instantly rose up from table, with an abruptness that would have astonished a stranger prodigiously, and darted out of the room. Upon this he burst into a loud laugh; and slapping me on the shoulder with an air of extraordinary satisfaction, exclaimed—‘ Well, my boy, you see I am still Old Truepenny; and though to the full as heavily laden with years as yourself, have fifty times your spirits, and can set the women a going whenever I think proper.’ Then turning round to the clergyman, and pointing to his son, he asked, with an arch significance of countenance—‘ Do you think, doctor, that fellow will be a quarter the man I am when he comes to my age?—Hey—what say you, petticoats?’ The gentleman replied, he believed not; and my friend ordered us to fill a bumper directly, for he still piques himself upon being able to drink a couple of bottles of an evening.

When our glasses were charged—‘ Now,’ says he, ‘ I’ll give you a toast.’ He did so with a witness; and totally forgetting the presence of his son, the profession of the clergyman, and the sobriety of my character, gave what would scarcely have issued from the underbred intoxication of an Irish chairman in a night-cellar. For my own part, I turned round in disgust, the clergyman wiped his face, and the son stooped to buckle his shoe, in order to avoid the disagreeable necessity of blushing for his father, whose behaviour was

no less ill-timed than it was illiberal. I was in hopes the visible dissatisfaction which we all manifested on this occasion would have kept my antiquated buck in a little order for the remainder of the evening: but here, Sir, I was miserably mistaken; every glass brought on a new instance of obscenity, and produced a fresh question, whether he was not the heartiest cock, of his years, in the universe. The lowest amours of his youthful days were raked up with the most paltry degree of ostentation; and he seemed to gain a new share of life from the mere repetition of those circumstances which should have made him sorry that he ever lived at all.

Youth is but a poor excuse for a man’s playing the fool; but no palliation can possibly be offered where a grey head is striving to re-exist in the remembrance of former vices, and is ambitious of preserving the same reputation for extravagancies in the deepening vale of years, which rendered him contemptible to the thinking part of the world when a boy of nineteen. If a man is really desirous of being respected in the decline of life, he must act in such a manner as to deserve the universal esteem of his acquaintance; instead of deviating into ribaldry, he must make an absolute display of his good sense, and build his applause upon the rectitude of his own sentiments, instead of applying to the depravity of ours. A debauchee of sixty is no less a scandal to nature, than a disgrace to morality; and we cannot help feeling a secret kind of horror, when we see a father profligately jesting with his children, and taking every opportunity to steel them against the nicer sensations of delicacy and virtue. The parent who acts in this manner, has not only his own errors to answer for, but in a great measure the crimes of his posterity. The human mind has a natural promptitude to err, and we are all of us but too fond of copying the examples of those whom we have been taught to reverence and love. For the sake of the rising generation, therefore, let me earnestly exhort the *old hearty cocks* of the present age, to pay some little regard to this reflection; since the reputation and welfare of their families ought to engage a considerable share of their attention, however indifferent they may be about their own.

Nº LXII. SATURDAY, APRIL 9.

NOtwithstanding a number of writers have very judiciously employed their pens in exposing the ridiculous partiality which the generality of parents feel in favour of their own children; yet there is one species of this partiality which, though the most fatal in its effects, has however engag'd but the smallest part of their notice; for which reason I propose to make it the subject of my present discussion, and flatter myself that it will be received, on account of its importance, with a particular share of indulgence by the public.

The prejudice upon which I intend to animadvert, is the opinion absurdly entertained by every body, that the beauty of their daughters will be always certain of making their fortunes. This unhappy prepossession is now so universally adopted, that few parents attend to more than the mere superficials of a young lady's education. A mother, now-a-days, instead of inculcating lessons of prudence and morality, is only solicitous about the personal accomplishments of her rising angel: instead of teaching her to be humble, modest, and unaffected, she lays down no rules but those of pride; no precepts but those of arrogance; and no documents but those of affectation. Before Miss is out of her hanging-sleeves, she is accustomed to the most extravagant praises of her own beauty; and is instructed in a belief that, so the delicacy of her complexion is attended to, there is no necessity whatsoever to pay the least regard to the cultivation of her mind. Hence she can argue upon the excellency of Naples dew, before she knows a single commandment in the décalogue; and descant upon the smartness of a ribband, before she is acquainted with a letter in the alphabet.

The natural consequence of such an education is, that she becomes intolerably vain, and insupportably ignorant. The first of these amiable qualifications, her vanity, renders her totally blind to every merit in the character of another person; and the latter renders her as totally insensible of the grossest absurdity in her own. Calculated merely for shew,

her only study is to attract a crowd of fools to the standard of her beauty; and, taught that a woman with so exquisite a face has a just pretension to the first offers in the kingdom, she is continually aspiring above the level of her circumstances. By this means, she most commonly withers in contempt upon the stalk of an antiquated virginity, or sacrifices her reputation to some debauchee of fashion, whom she vainly imagines to draw in for a husband. It is below a beauty ever to think of marrying with a man of her own rank; her charms are to procure something infinitely superior; and there is scarcely a tradesman's daughter with a passable face, in the weekly bills, but what now and then thinks of an equipage with a tolerable degree of confidence; and imagines herself pretty certain, at least, of a gentleman or a knight, though she should even fail of gaining a helpmate with a coronet.

The strangest thing, however, in this unaccountable notion with which people are deluded, of a daughter's making a fortune with her face, is, that every one supposes the world will look through the magnifying glass of parental prepossession, and conceive just such an opinion of the girl's personal attractions as they are silly enough to entertain themselves, without ever recollecting that others have no natural interest in the young lady, either to be blind to her defects, or sensible of her perfections: they are astonished that we should differ from their idea of her merit; and absolutely demand that tribute of admiration from our justice, which is nothing but the ridiculous result of their own partiality.

How often, I appeal to my readers, have they heard a mother extolling the face of some half-begotten thing to the skies as a miracle of excellency; and, in the fulness of her heart, exclaiming — 'My beauty! my queen!' and 'my angel!' where the poor little wretch had actually the features of a jackanapes! For my own part, I have seen such things a thousand times, and among my own relations too. My cousin Suke has a little girl of about ten years old, who is blind of an eye, and

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seamed with the small-pox like a Savoy-cabbage; yet Suke imagines that her daughter will, one time or other, make a conquest of a nobleman; and has been known to praise the ineffable sweetness of her Patty's face, though the company were at that very moment talking about Lady Sarah Bunbury, or the Duchess of Hamilton.

Were parents, however, to act with prudence, they might easily judge, from what they themselves think of other people's children, how other people are affected at the sight of theirs. This single mode of judging would, in a moment, unbind the charm which fascinates the heart of so many fathers and mothers, and convince them that there were a number of requisites necessary to form a compleat woman, besides the possession of a smooth face and an agreeable person: they would then see, that a well-cultivated mind had an infinite superiority over the most rosy cheek in the universe; and discover that something more than a bare knowledge in fixing a head-dress, or pinning a hand-kerchief, was indispensably proper for the mistress of a family.

In fact, the men are not such fools as

they may be generally imagined. A young fellow, if he wants to make an occasional connection with a lady, scarcely ever looks for more than figure or make. By the same rule that he buys a horse, he chuses his mistress. But the case is widely different when he comes to think of a wife: however he may laugh at prudence and discretion in himself, he always requires it in her; and thinks he is infinitely more liable to suffer in the public opinion, through the minutest foible of her's, than through the greatest error of his own: for this reason, the wildest libertine, when he thinks of marrying, generally looks out for a woman of virtue and understanding. Experience has taught him how small a share the mere attractions of a fine face have in the formation of real happiness; and if he chuses a person that *wants* a fortune, yet his choice is most commonly a person that can *save* one. Hence matrimony is the only thing in which he seldom suffers himself to be duped; and he hardly ever dreams of asking the hand of a mere beauty, while there is a possibility for him to gain a woman of real beauty and merit too.

Nº LXIII. SATURDAY, APRIL 16.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THE strictures in your last paper on the ridiculous propensity which the generality of people have to suppose the beauty of their daughters will at any time be sufficient to make their fortunes, are so very much in point, that I cannot resist a desire of troubling you with my little story, especially as it may perhaps be a means of preventing some other parents from following the unhappy example of my poor father and mother, whose ill-judged tenderness in this respect was the original source of all my misfortunes.

My father, you must know, Mr. Babler, was the youngest son of a good family, but had, however, no other dependence than an employment under the government, which brought him in about five hundred pounds a year. As he was naturally of a generous disposition, he never thought of minding his

circumstances by marrying a woman with money, though he had a person and an address which rendered it no way difficult for him to succeed with the ladies. On the contrary, Sir, he followed the implicit direction of his inclination; and before he was five and twenty, married my mother, the daughter of a Gloucestershire baronet, whose whole fortune consisted of a long line of ancestors, a high notion of gentility, and a very agreeable face.

With a disposition on both sides to make every thing wear the most elegant appearance, it is not to be wondered at, if on either there were no extraordinary notions of œconomy. I was born in about a twelvemonth after their union; and I have heard my mother say, the bare preparations for her lying-in amounted to near a hundred and fifty pounds. Being the only product of their affections, I was treated as if I was something more than mortal. In my earliest infancy I was discovered to have

have some irresistible attractions. My mother, before my eyes were well open, declared them a pair of the right killing kind; and if I happened but to cry for a little bread and milk, my father found out in every squall some indications of a wonderful fagacity. In short, I was looked upon as an absolute *Olio or sal-mongundy of perfections*, to use the words of a fashionable author; and was almost in danger of being devoured, through the *insatiable fondness*, as I may call it, of my poor father and mother.

When I grew towards seven or eight, and had passed the ordeal of a fiery small-pox with pretty good success, I was pronounced a perfect beauty; and my friends all concluded, that it was impossible but what such a woman as I promised to turn out must make her fortune by her personal attractions. Infatuated by this unaccountable prepossession, my mother's sole attention was confined to those accomplishments which were rather engaging than necessary, and rendered a woman superficially agreeable, without being of any intrinsic use. Thus, Sir, when other girls of my age were advancing pretty fast in the progress of French, Italian, and English authors, I was studying how to play at quadrille, or exercising the whole army of my little graces before the looking-glass. Instead of growing a mistress at my needle, and assisting to make up the linen of the family, I was instructed to laugh at industry, and told, that poring on a piece of work would inevitably injure my eyes, or endanger my constitution. Going to church, they as good as told me, was extremely vulgar; and it was hinted, that I should shew my spirit, by taking care to rate the servants very soundly whenever they grew either familiar or impertinent. In short, Sir, in this hopeful manner I reached my sixteenth year, and knew nothing in nature but how to make a cap, play a game at cards, turn out my toes a little tolerably, and play a lesson or two on the harpsichord.

As I was now bordering on the age when my mother expected my person would work miracles, she took uncommon pains to tell me, that those who were my equals only were infinitely beneath me; and that none but those who were considerably my superiors could

possibly be as good as myself. Vanity and indiscretion, the characteristics of my years, were open to every document of this nature; and I looked upon it as a derogation from my consequence, to be seen in less than honourable company. For this purpose, I even descended to be treated with indifference; put up with an insult from the daughter of a man of fashion, for the sake of numbering her amongst my acquaintance; and permitted some familiarities, not criminal however, from her brother, to purchase the honour of his attending on me in public. The consequence of this behaviour was, however, fatal: before I was eighteen, I refused two or three very considerable offers from people of my own rank; and before I was nineteen, fell a victim to the illiberal machinations of a villain with an earldom, who visited on my account at my father's, and flattered him with a notion of speedily becoming my husband.

Not to dwell upon this unhappy circumstance, suffice it, that shame and disappointment quickly broke the heart of my poor father, who died, lamenting with his last breath his error in my education, and was followed by his miserable relict in less than six weeks. With my father died all my hopes of subsistence; and what I should have done for bread, God only knows, had not a most excellent lady, who was compelled into a marriage with my betrayer, a little after I was undone by him, purchased me out of her pin-money an annuity of a hundred pounds for my life, and generously sent it me in a manner that doubled the obligation. Upon this I have resided near ten years in a remote part of the country, endeavouring, by a close application to the best authors, to unlearn the principal part of what I was formerly taught: and to atone, by an exemplary conduct during the remainder of my days, for the indiscretions of my past behaviour. May my story prove a means of preventing the ruin of other young women; and teach such parents as mine, that the only way of raising a real happiness for their children, is to lay the foundation on discretion and virtue. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

THEODORA.

Nº LXIV. SATURDAY, APRIL 23.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THERE is a species of ill-breeding which I have observed to be extremely prevalent among several of our modern pretenders to politeness; and which, as it gives much uneasiness to a number of well-meaning people, I have taken the liberty of condemning in the following little narrative; and shall therefore esteem it as a singular obligation, if you will lay it before the public through the channel of your excellent paper.

You must know, Mr. Babler, that I live in a tolerably genteel street, not far from Lincoln's Inn, and have made it my principal study during the whole time of my residence to give no offence whatsoever to any person in the neighbourhood. Unhappily, however, Sir, there is an antiquated gentleman who lives almost opposite to me, and who has a family consisting of a wife every whit as venerable as himself, two daughters to whom Nature has been uncommonly parsimonious in the distribution of her personal graces, and a servant-maid. As this amiable little community pride themselves prodigiously on the regularity of their own conduct, they are continually upon the watch to pry into the behaviour of every body else. Hence, Sir, if a gentleman knocks at my door about business, some one of them continually runs to the window to see who it is; and comments, in a tone loud enough to be distinctly heard across the way, either upon his dress or his person. If I have company with me in the parlour, some of them stand sentinel on me at the dining-room; and if I take my guests into the dining-room, they mount to the second floor, where they have a full command of all my motions, and reduce me to the disagreeable alternative of bearing the whole torrent of their impertinent observations, or of letting down my curtains. To be sure, Sir, I am not the only object of this obliging solicitude; as far as they can possibly see, they manifest a laudable anxiety for the conduct of their neighbours; and being fortunately situated in a house

pretty remarkable for the convenience of its prospect, they strike a kind of awe through a number of families considerably better than themselves, and are almost as good as our reforming class of constables, to enforce the minutest propriety of behaviour.

Did their impertinence, however, extend no farther, it might perhaps be borne with some degree of temper, and they might possibly be considered as objects of our pity, without ever exciting our resentment. But, alas! Mr. Babler, the buckling of a shoe, or the wearing of a clean shirt, sets them into a tittering; and a little more powder in one's wig than ordinary, occasions a horse laugh. My wife, Sir, being as good-natured and placid a girl as ever existed, this disposition gives them so great an advantage over her, that she can never look out of her own window, and is always in the greatest distress if the servant keeps her a moment at the door. If she puts on a fresh gown to visit a friend, she hears—‘ Lord, we are dressed to day!’ breaking from the opposite side of the street; and if she sends home but an humble leg of mutton from market, there is a—‘ Pon my word, we are resolved to live well, however, let who will pay for it!’ Nay, Sir, my little girl, an infant under two years of age, comes in for her share of this delicate treatment; and her mother having a day or two ago bought her a new bonnet, the child has ever since undergone the severest exertion of their wit, and—‘ God love you, look at Miss!’ is the continual expression whenever the maid appears with her at the door, or takes her out into Lincoln's Inn gardens for a little air and exercise. In short, Sir, not an article in our dress, nor a feature in our faces, escapes the eagle-eyed notice of our worthy neighbours; and there is scarce a possibility of conceiving how very unhappy we have been rendered by this excess of curiosity and impertinence.

Were these good people themselves, either distinguished by any uncommon elegance of appearance, or amiableness of person, this behaviour would be the less extraordinary; but, Sir, Sunday is perhaps

perhaps the only day in the week on which they change their linen ; and I have already hinted, that there is no extraordinary share of beauty in the family. As for the father, he is an absolute *Oran Otan* ; a mere man of the woods ; the old gentlewoman is the immediate idea of that venerable lady to whom Saul paid a midnight visit at Endor ; and the eldest daughter, to an unmeaningness of face that actually borders upon lunacy, joins a couple of tusks that project a surprising way from the mouth, like the forks of an elephant ; the youngest, to borrow an expression from the Copper Captain, has a 'husk about her like a chesnut,' which so compleatly absorbs every vestige of humanity, that I am almost at a loss in what order of beings to rank her ; and, therefore, though her sex has perhaps been already ascertained, I shall put her species down in the doubtful gender.

There is nothing, Mr. Babler, which betrays an understanding so weak, or a heart so malevolent, as an inclination to render others undeservedly uneasy. The people of every little

neighbourhood, like the members of the largest communities, should always endeavour to engage one another's esteem by a mutual intercourse of good, at least of obliging, offices : true politeness, however this unfashionable sense of the word may be exploded, consists in exerting our utmost abilities to promote the satisfaction of our neighbours. A contrary disposition, though it may be reckoned extremely witty by some, can be considered in that light by none but the ignorant or the worthless : Whoever thinks the approbation of such an essential to their happiness, has my full permission to solicit it ; but I will readily affirm, that every sensible and benevolent mind will hold them in detestation or contempt, and look upon them as an equal disgrace and nuisance to society. What a pity is it, Sir, that, like other nuisances, there is no method of presenting them by a grand jury : as there is not, suffer me to present them in this manner, and be assured, you will have the thanks of many families in my part of the town, besides those of your most humble servant,

CENSOR.

Nº LXV. SATURDAY, APRIL 30.

TO know mankind, and to profit by their follies, is generally the wish of the mercenary ; but there are some who think, that exposing their own follies to public view is the truest means of acquiring an insight into those of others. This method of a man's subjecting himself to voluntary distress, in order to become acquainted with human nature, goes by the name of seeing life ; so that, as the phrase goes, the young fellow is now said to have seen most of life who has experienced most misery.

I have often, with pity, regarded some of my more youthful acquaintance who took this experimental way of becoming philosophers, and who thought proper to buy all the little wit they had by their sufferings : and yet, in fact, when we come to examine this ascetic sect of students, we shall find them utterly ignorant of real life, and skilled only in the ceremonies of a night cellar, or the etiquette of a brothel.

It is amusing enough to listen to one

of these gentlemen, who has the character of being profoundly versed in life, exerting his superiority of skill in company. He has a new phrase for every thing : 'Tip us a wag of your m—nus,' is, for instance, Shake hands ; 'Let us have a buss at your muns,' is, Let me kiss you. For such humour as this, our unfortunate creature has had his head broken, his pockets picked, and his constitution destroyed, though fully convinced of his errors the very moment he was running into them with the greatest avidity.

It has been often said, that half the pains which some men take to be rogues could very comfortably have supported them in honesty. With equal truth it may be said, that half the labours which these men use in the pursuit of pleasure, could have supplied them with a double portion of the means. Pleasure is not so coy a mistress as these men would persuade us that she is ; she needs not be pursued through the mazes of a night adventure, nor earned by the hazard of

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losing a nose; the usual beaten tract to happiness is ever the surest, and to live like the rest of mankind is a strong presumption that the traveller is in the right way. When one of our blooded young fellows, with a true eccentricity of thinking, separates from the crowd, in order to enjoy higher delights than his acquaintance, he only becomes the object of contempt and derision, and, like a deer in the forest, he ever finds least safety when alone.

The ridicule of every age has been levelled against this absurd pursuer of life; and still, like the witch in the fable, as he has been hunted down in one shape, he has assumed another. In the Spectator's days, the buck of the time was called a *Mohock*; he afterwards received the appellation of a *Blood*; and, at present, he is called a *Buck*: the three characters of the different times, however, are very nearly the same; they differ in little more than appellation; and are all equally distinguished for malevolence of heart and weakness of understanding.

The most extraordinary circumstance in the characters of these worthy gentlemen who know so much of life, is, that scarcely one in a thousand of them knows any thing of life at all; or at best, lik a maggot in a cheese, he only eats into the rotten part of it; and, after fattening for a season on the common of folly and licentiousness, he comes out pampered with nothing but ignorance and immorality.

Let one of the most experienced philosophers in the system of modern life come for half an hour into company with two or three rational beings, and he looks as if he was absolutely of a different species. Conversant with nothing but what he ought *not* to know, he is incapable of conducting himself, either like a man of sense or a gentleman; and, acquainted only with the despicable frolics of the Garden, he is at a visible loss if a subject of the least erudition is started; and perplexed if he hears a syllable bordering upon politeness or good-breeding; he languishes only for an indelicate toast, or an oppor-

tunity of introducing some paltry little adventure, which ought to be reserved for a set of intoxicated apprentices on a Christmas holiday. Even in the presence of the most modest among the softer sex, he does not hesitate to mention the name of some fashionable demirep; nor scruple to boast of a Newgate acquaintance with an executed highwayman.

Yet, notwithstanding this description of a *modern buck* is pretty exact, there is an unaccountable ambition among the greatest number of our young fellows to shew a tolerable pretension to the character. From a strange opinion that libertinism is a proof of good sense, they all sacrifice the little sense which they possess to become libertines, and are infinitely less fearful of being looked upon as profligates than being ridiculed as fools.

Those, however, who would willingly arrive at the good opinion of the world, and merit the secret approbation of their own hearts, must act upon a very opposite principle. Little as the world may follow the documents of virtue, it nevertheless admires them; and we ourselves are never more ready to venerate a man of principle, than when on account of our vices he treats us with contempt. Let us, therefore, instead of being what in our hearts we really detest, endeavour to arrive at what we are ambitious to be thought; and make that very pride, which hurries us into such a number of excesses, a laudable incentive to the road of perfection.

Virtue, in fact, wants only to be known to have a number of admirers; and as in the pursuit of those vices which destroy both our temporal and our eternal felicity, habit increases our relish for persevering; so in the practice of all that can ensure our happiness here and hereafter, habit also impels us to proceed, and furnishes continual inducements which gradually leads us to the most exalted principle of human excellence. The man, therefore, who will not be happy, has nobody to censure but himself; as the power is entirely in his hands, if he chuses but to exert it.

